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**Negotiating institutional transformation:
A case study of gender-based change
in a
South African university**

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ABSTRACT

This study contributes towards understanding the complex dynamics that are inherent in the transformation of institutional culture in the higher education environment in South Africa. Innovative use was made of gender-based change as a case study of social transformation in a case institution, the University of Cape Town. A feminist, qualitative approach was used to map gender as a component of institutional culture and to explore how the institution's culture influences the dynamics of gender-based change. A gendered lens was focused on three different sources of data: the leadership discourse from 28 years of annual Vice Chancellor's Reports, and interview and documentary data around two purposively selected feminist initiatives to further women's career development in the higher education environment. The integration of analyses of different types of data from these three sources proved to be a powerful tool for exposing contested meanings and highlighting discrepancies between the logic of the organization and experienced realities.

My research corroborates numerous previous studies of universities worldwide and reveals the case institution to have a conservative, patriarchal culture. In addition to the formal hierarchical and collegial structures typical of many universities, aspects of the institutional culture that contribute towards its marked conservatism were identified. The analyses revealed how the hegemony of academic and androcentric discourses resulted in a culture which 'others' people into differently empowered groups and how this interacts with a dominant liberal discourse that values and privileges individualism. The resultant mystification is exhausting and confusing to those who are not part of the dominant group, and combines with fragmented understandings of purpose to stifle institutional change and thus strengthen conservatism.

Beyond the male hegemony, the most significant aspect of the gendered institutional culture is the persistent vanishing of gender on the campus. There is little evidence of any ability to engage seriously with gender or any

recognition that this might be a priority. The gender-based change initiatives that were studied were the result of spontaneous action of tempered radicals, insiders within the institution who felt alienated by aspects of its culture and thus were positioned also as outsiders. Both initiatives have resulted in successful programmes but an analysis of the dynamics around their establishment shows the power of the institutional culture to neutralize and de-politicize their impact on the gendered culture, despite the pervasiveness of the liberal discourse. I suggest that for change to succeed it is necessary to purposely reduce the power that the conservative institution can exert. This can be achieved by avoiding direct confrontation with the dominant patriarchal culture and by forging appropriate, sympathetic external alliances with those who have influence and access to resources.

My research suggests that transformation of the institutional culture is unlikely to be led by those who, by conforming to the culture, have attained hierarchical leadership positions and are thus most threatened by change. Transformation is most likely to be brought about by those who question norms, seize opportunities and focus on small wins. The liberal discourse common to many universities leads to a tolerance of mavericks, and I suggest that this can provide opportunities to surface the silent voices that must inform debates around transformation. However I have revealed how resistant the sector can be to cultural change. My analyses have shown how even ostensibly very successful initiatives can be assimilated and how their ability to result in institutional change can be disempowered using political structures and micropolitics. Effecting transformation of the complex institutional culture in higher education will require a deep engagement with these powerful conservative forces.

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University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

....[T]he process of transformation is slow, messy, fraught with continual setbacks, and much more complicated than anyone setting out to pursue it wanted to believe."

(Hultman, cited in Sparks, 2003, p. 123)

Higher education has the potential to influence the social and economic development of a nation. This is especially important in developing countries as they strive towards economic sustainability and social justice. In South Africa universities are charged with developing human talent and skills, generating new knowledge and appropriate technologies, and "*driving and contributing to the reconstruction and development of South African society*" (Ministry of Education, 2001). This is a challenging call from a country with a devastating apartheid past to a sector that has for centuries been characterized by conservatism.

Twentieth century South Africa, a bastard of the West, born of colonialism and crippled by apartheid, inherited the western-style of universities with their European culture dominated by white men. During the final decades of the twentieth century the irony of this anachronism, here in an Africa moving into a new century, in a country developing one of the most advanced democracies in the world, became increasingly obvious. Our higher education institutions that should be educating the leaders of the future reflected the profiles and epistemologies of the past. On the one hand universities are the incubators of new ideas and the nurseries of future savants. On the other, they are among the most conservative of organizations, changing little over centuries, replicating their management of knowledge through an international code of embedded practice. The continued hegemonic, patriarchal nature of universities has been commented on by authors around the world (Evans, 1995, Heward, 1996, Morley and Walsh, 1996, Petersen and Gravett, 2000). In the South Africa of the 1990's with the country embracing its new democracy the

pressure for 'transformation' of the higher education system became increasingly compelling.

But what exactly is meant by 'transformation' of higher education? The sector has seen structural changes, mergers of institutions, changes in demographics and globalization has impacted institutional functioning. The White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education goes beyond these to ambitiously describe its vision:

The transformation of the higher education system and its institutions requires:

- *Increased and broadened participation. Successful policy must overcome an historically determined pattern of fragmentation, inequality and inefficiency. It must increase access for black, women, disabled and mature students, and generate new curricula and flexible models of learning and teaching, including modes of delivery, to accommodate a larger and more diverse student population.*
- *Responsiveness to social interests and needs. Successful policy must restructure the higher education system and its institutions to meet the needs of an increasingly technologically-orientated economy. It must also deliver the requisite research, the highly trained people and the knowledge to equip a developing society with the capacity to address national needs and to participate in a rapidly changing and competitive global context.*
- *Cooperation and partnerships in governance. Successful policy must reconceptualise the relationship between higher education and the state, civil society and stakeholders, and among institutions. It must also create an enabling institutional environment and culture that is sensitive to and affirms diversity, promotes reconciliation and respect for human life, protects the dignity of individuals from racial and sexual harassment, and rejects all other forms of violent behaviour.*
(Department of Education, 1997, p. 7)

The existence of a national Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education is to be celebrated, but a plan is words on paper until it translates into the day to day experiences of individuals. Several years after the publication of this plan, as a woman with many years in the higher education sector in South Africa, I had not experienced any significant outworkings of the Department of Education's Programme, particularly concerning the aspect of transformation that most closely

impacted me, transformation of the strongly masculine University culture. This stimulated the questioning that subsequently led to my commencing this research project around gender-based change and transformation, a project which has translated into a challenging personal journey.

Thus my interest in change, gender and the peculiarities of the higher education environment is a product of my personal experiences and the challenges presented by a transforming South Africa. I was the first generation in my family to enter higher education and, rebelling against what I found to be the cloistered environment of a girls-only, private, church school, I chose to study science, determinedly choosing geology as my field, probably one of the most male-dominated of the sciences. For many years I reveled in this environment but as I got older my gender awareness evolved and I became more and more noticing of the dominance of male colleagues in senior positions. Not only in fields such as geology, but across the University young men who had studied with me were now moving into hierarchical leadership positions. Men chaired committees, men were keynote speakers, men were heads of department, men got awards, men ran the University, or did they? When I looked I saw women, often obscured by these men, working hard, taking responsibility, playing a leadership role in their environments yet not receiving the same academic or institutional recognition.

After decades of contentious and difficult struggle against the apartheid regime change came to South Africa. Those who were oppressed were to be freed. Those who served were to lead, repressive ideologies were consigned to the scrap heap of history. The country and all its institutions would 'transform' to embody the vision of the new South Africa. Women and people of colour were to be welcomed in to inner circles and leadership positions as equals. My liberal, progressive University would surely be at the forefront of this change. Dr Mamphela Ramphele was appointed first as Deputy Vice Chancellor, then as Vice Chancellor: the first black woman Vice Chancellor in South Africa.

From within the institution it seemed that although transformation had become the rhetoric and structural changes were rife, changes in culture and climate were hard to detect. Was transformation taking place? Who were leading it? How was it

happening? My observations of women in the higher education environment led me to speculate that just as their academic and leadership contribution was not being recognized, possibly their contribution towards bringing about change was also being lost in the patriarchal leadership culture. Women (and black people) stood to benefit from transformation, surely they would be pushing it harder than the white male-dominated leadership? I went on to ask questions such as: How can we measure the progress of transformation? What is facilitating or impeding it? How can we study this elusive concept (transformation) in this complex environment (higher education)? Whilst positivist analyses of policies and statistics around demographics can provide some benchmarks I believe that they ignore the realities that are experienced on a daily basis by individuals.

In my study I have attempted to capture some of these individual perspectives to shed light on the processes of institutional transformation. In this I build on awareness that the contrast experienced in universities between fermenting ideas and ideologies that can change the world and the institutional inertia around alignment to that changed world is felt particularly starkly by the increasing numbers of people who might be deemed 'the other', the women and people of colour who have been increasingly moving into Western academia as the ideas of racial and gender equality permeate society. In my research I make use of the heightened awareness of 'the other', but it is important to note that although gender is the focus of my study of transformation, in reality in South Africa in particular, issues identity and gendered power are intimately intertwined with those of race and class. Exploring the complexity of this interaction is beyond the scope of this thesis, but I theorize that it is possible to explore the power interactions around gender-based change in order to gain insights into broader issues of transformation.

The purpose of this study is to contribute towards understanding transformational change dynamics in the complex higher education environment. I have chosen a self-reflexive, feminist, qualitative approach focusing on the aspect of transformation with which I have personal experience, gender-based change. This is explored in the context of a case study university, and I theorize that by focusing on the power dynamics around gender-based change I will expose dynamics relevant to understanding the broader-based transformation in the sector. Authors such as

Bennett (2002), Nicholson (1996) and Morley (1995, 1996, 1999) have illustrated how feminist studies of higher education have brought critical insights into the functioning of power relations within universities. They have shown the value of gender analysis as a tool for understanding institutional interactions. I apply gender analysis to a case study university, the University of Cape Town (UCT), which, being one of the few higher education institutions in South Africa not involved in a government-imposed merger, is able to concentrate on grappling with the more elusive meanings of institutional transformation. As suggested by Professor Ndebele (the current Vice Chancellor of UCT) in the quote below I theorize that my findings, although focused on one aspect of social transformation in a specific institution, will have relevance to other universities in South Africa.

An overview of national developments in higher education and the manner in which transformation is being grappled with in other higher education institutions suggests that many of the challenges and issues we face at UCT are not institution-specific, but are widely shared across the sector. (Ndebele, 2005, p.8)

1.1 Aims of the study

Within the South African context outlined above, the purpose of my research is to examine how gender-based transformations are effected in the higher education environment, and to explore what this can tell us about negotiating transformation in higher education institutions. In order to do this I focus on three research objectives.

The first of these is to map gender as a component of the university's culture. The culture of an organization encompasses the competing understandings of the values and beliefs that underlie all its interactions and activities and which are so integral to the environment that they become an invisible, natural part of it (Gherardi, 1995, Parker, 2000). By making visible aspects of the gendered culture I am able to assess the university both as an institution requiring change and as possessing specific characteristics that might facilitate or impede that change.

My second objective is to expose the dynamics of gender-based change in the higher education environment. Change calls for action which in turn stimulates

reaction. The overt and covert reactions to change initiatives reflect the institution's capacity for change and influence its success, thus affecting the impact of that change on the institution.

In addressing my third objective I integrate these findings about the institutional culture and change dynamics around gender-based change to explore implications for negotiating the comprehensive institutional transformation that is required of South African universities.

These objectives require me to work with complex concepts which defy simplistic definitions. This complexity is powerfully illustrated by Parker (2000, p. 1) reflecting on organizational culture.

Thinking about organization culture therefore involves recognizing the inseparability of binaries – together and apart, general and unique, structures and agents, organizations and identities – in sum, organizational culture both as a constraint and as an everyday accomplishment.

Accordingly, a major challenge of my research has been to develop a methodology to take account of this complexity. Thus, in support of addressing my research objectives outlined above, development of an innovative research methodology has been critical.

1.2 Outline of Chapters

My thesis comprises eleven chapters, which address the four main components of my work. These are the context of the study, the methodology I have developed, analysis of the data, and finally a discussion of findings and conclusions.

Context of the study

My research focuses on gendered change and higher education institutions as organizations. There is a vast literature on these topics and I have attempted to provide a summary of relevant previous research in the two chapters following on from this Introduction. The first outlines the changing view of organizations and highlights some of the theories about effecting organizational change. Gender is

positioned as a component of organizational culture which influences institutional and personal power interactions. The second literature review chapter, Chapter 3, introduces higher education institutions as a subset of large bureaucratic organizations. The Chapter contextualizes higher education in South Africa against the background of globalization and national requirements for transformation. Literature on women in higher education and gender in the South African higher education context is also outlined.

Methodology

In Chapter 4 I describe how I developed my conceptual approach and present the theorization around my Research Objectives. Four concepts that are fundamental to my topic are discussed. These are transformation, the university, institutional culture, and the concept of gender. Gherardi's description of gender as "*a pervasive symbol of the power relation*" (Gherardi, 1995, p. 17) underpins my feminist perspective. My reflexive, feminist, qualitative methodology is described and I conclude the chapter by a discussion of my approach to analyzing data from the University of Cape Town as a case institution, using two embedded studies of feminist initiatives and analysis of the University's leadership discourse. I also note how my location with respect to this research presents particularly challenging ethical dilemmas.

Analysis of the data

Chapter 5 briefly introduces the University of Cape Town before presenting an analysis of my first data genre, the annual Vice Chancellor's Reports. The analysis focuses on key aspects of the leadership discourse on institutional transformation, with a particular focus on gender and, to a lesser extent, race. The Reports cover nearly 30 years and are thus also valuable in providing a historical context to my gender-based change initiatives.

In Chapter 6 I introduce my first initiative, the University's childcare facility, the Educare Centre, providing more detail on my methodological approach and introducing each of the participants who contributed data. Pseudonyms are used for all participants, but, as positionality is significant in exploring perceptions of culture, the introductions explore these positionalities as background to the analysis of the data in the next chapter. Chapter 7 analyses the dynamics around the

institutionalization of the Educare Centre over three decades, and explores its impact as an example of gender-based change.

My second initiative, HERS-SA, a professional development programme for women in higher education, is introduced in Chapter 8. Recognizing the importance of context in my feminist qualitative approach, I again position all the participants with respect to the institution and the focus of my research. The analysis of the institutional culture and change dynamics around the HERS-SA initiative is presented in Chapter 9, and again I attempt to evaluate any impact on the gendered culture of the institution.

Discussion and conclusions

My findings are discussed in Chapter 10. I start with an assessment of my methodology and then look at the insights my data has provided about the University of Cape Town as an organization. This context enables me to address my first research objective and map gender as a component of the institutional culture. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the dynamics of gender-based change which reveals valuable insights around my second research objective. In Chapter 11 I theorize around my findings about gendered institutional culture and gender-based change dynamics to take the discussion toward transformation, in particular transformation of the gendered institutional culture, but I also explore whether any of my findings might contribute towards understanding some of the dynamics relevant to the broader transformation of higher education in South Africa.

1.3 Notes on presentation

In order to facilitate reading the thesis, I briefly explain conventions I have used in the text.

Capitalization

When I refer to the University (capitalizing the U) I am referring to the University of Cape Town. Similarly, when I refer to the Reports (capitalizing the R) I am referring

to the annual Vice Chancellor's Reports. A small 'u' and small 'r' refer to the common noun.

Quotes

Longer quotes from texts are indented, in italics. Shorter quotes form part of the paragraph, and are highlighted by italics and double quotation marks (".."). Single quotation marks are to signify that a word is used purposively and do not represent a quotation. Longer quotes from interview transcripts are italicized and indented.

Acronyms

Acronyms are spelt out the first time they are used, but for the reader's convenience a list of acronyms is provided in Appendix 1.

References

References are divided into two lists, those that are published documents and thus widely accessible, and those that are unpublished documents. The unpublished documents are referred to by date alone in the text.

CHAPTER 2

2. ORGANIZATIONS AND GENDER

2.1 Introduction

In this study I am focusing on processes and perceptions related to transformation in the University of Cape Town, a large bureaucratic organization. The University employs some 2 500 people, and has a student population of about 22 000. Whilst universities have a structure distinct from state or corporate bureaucracies, all large organizations have much in common. As a prelude to my exploration of gender-based transformation in higher education, it is useful to draw on the understanding that research has brought to organizational structure and functioning over the past 50 years. In this Chapter I start with a brief look at some of the major developments in the understanding of organizations and their interaction with their environments as it manifests as organizational change. As my research uses a gender lens, this is followed by a review of some of the literature on gender in organizations and how this manifests as organizational culture. The broader higher education environment and the university as a specific kind of organization are addressed in Chapter 3.

2.2 Organizations, bureaucracy and diversity

Most large organizations are bureaucracies. In 1922 Weber introduced the concept of bureaucracy as the most efficient way to organize people. As described by Weber, bureaucracies had a clear hierarchical structure, people were trained to do their specific jobs, and written rules and procedures ensured efficiency and productivity. During the late 1960s a number of people started questioning this rigid mechanical approach to organizations, and in 1969 authors such as Bennis, Backhard, Tannenbaum and Davis were writing about a more organic approach in which the human factor was taken into account (Fresch and Bell, 1995). There was talk of people being an organization's most important resource and the need for

active participation in decision making as against strict top-down control. The more recent postmodern view recognizes the growing diversity within bureaucracies and sees them as needing to be more flexible as power relations are contested and continuously negotiated and re-negotiated. The advent of the global economy has brought people with diverse backgrounds and cultural values into large organizations where they have to work together effectively and efficiently.

An organization's approach to diversity was used by Taylor Cox (1993) to identify three kinds of organizations. The "Monolithic" organization ignores diversity and attempts to assimilate other cultures, resulting in minimal inter-group conflict due to identity homogeneity. The early bureaucratic organizations described by Weber were Monolithic, having been designed by (white), mainly middle-class men, for men. "Plural" organizations either ignore or tolerate diversity and have partial structural integration and limited informal integration. This can give rise to significant inter-group conflict. (I will later make a case to suggest that the University of Cape Town is a Plural organization.) Cox believes that to maximize the potential benefits of diversity, organizations should strive towards becoming "Multicultural" organizations. These value diversity and have full structural and informal integration, with minimal inter-group conflict. Kezar (2000) believes that the major challenge for leadership and organizations in the twenty-first century is to create an effective balance between interdependence and diversity.

Peter Drucker introduced the idea of the knowledge economy and highlighted the importance of the knowledge held by individuals at all levels in the organization. A current view of organizations sees them in terms of living organisms. Like living organisms organizations need the ability to adapt to changing environments.

The mechanical top-down view of organisations doesn't work well in our global and networked economy and world.... Research confirms that principles from life sciences are a better framework for thinking about organisations. (McLagan 2003, p. 5)

She points to organisms' ability to react to stress and tension with unpredictable new actions and directions, and links an organization's capacity to survive in today's complex world to its capacity to respond on all levels to its environment. Peter Senge's concept of the 'learning organization' points to how organizations can

become flexible, adaptive and productive. The learning organization is one which encourages people continually to expand their capacities to create what they want to create. In his writings he links learning to creation and sees people as agents in complex systems which they are able to shape. The concept of a diverse, learning organization in a knowledge economy is particularly relevant when we look at current university bureaucracy in South Africa in the following Chapter.

2.3 Organizational Change

The whole field of change in organizations, moving them from the idealized, mechanistic Weberian bureaucracies to diverse, reactive, living organisms has received significant attention over the past 40 years. There has been a growing awareness that organizations need to develop and adapt to the social and economic environments in which they operate. Three different terms have been applied to the need for organizations to adapt: organizational development, transformation and organizational change. Whilst these are not mutually exclusive and the terms are often loosely used, it is useful to look at examples of the use of each of them.

In the late 1960s, prior to the pressures of globalization, authors such as Warren Bennis were writing about Organizational Development. This was seen as moving away from a mechanistic, bureaucratic, top-down approach to one in which it was recognized that people at all levels, as human beings, rather than as cogs, could contribute towards the goals of the organization. Following this came awareness of the growing diversity in the workplace as more women and people from different classes and ethnic groups joined the workforce. This gave rise to the ethical imperative for equal opportunities and the need to integrate diverse peoples.

Thomas and Ely (1996) summarize the two main approaches to achieving diversity in organizations. Organizations working from the “*Discrimination-and-Fairness Paradigm*” believe that we are all the same and should aspire to being the same. They encourage and expect women and people of colour to blend in, resulting possibly in a diversified staff, but not a diversified organization. This assimilative approach results in little change to the organization. Organizations which work from

the “*Access-and-Legitimacy Paradigm*” accept and celebrate difference, but in emphasizing cultural differences tend to put people into niche areas where they work with or service a particular cultural group. Again this does not fundamentally change the organization or enable it to capitalize on diversity in the long run, and can result in employees feeling exploited. Thomas and Ely (1996) propose a new paradigm in which diversity is connected to work perspectives: the “*Learning-and-Effectiveness Paradigm*”. This is characterized by employees’ perspectives enhancing work and rethinking tasks, markets, strategies, products, business practices and even cultures.

Feminist and other authors have also drawn attention to the potential benefit that diversity might bring the organization (eg Kolb and Merrill-Sands, 1999). Some feminists have used the phrase Organizational Transformation to describe the complete change they believe is necessary in the culture of organizations. Rao and Stuart in a paper given at a conference on Gender and Development (1997, p. 10, 11) clearly state:

[W]hat we are aiming at is organizational transformation. We are not talking about organizational development, nor about organizational change.We want to move organizations in a direction that can accommodate, cherish, and foster the creativity and the productivity of women, men, young, old, people of colour, people of differing ability. We want organizations to incorporate goals and values that are life-affirming, human-centred, and justice-oriented.

McLagan (2002, n.p.) describes transformation as “*changes [that] require a redesign of virtually everything in the organisation – especially the fundamental beliefs and norms that guide decisions and actions.*” Transformation has become a political imperative in South Africa since the democratic elections and all organizations are under pressure to “transform”. The concept of organizational transformation in the South African higher education context will be looked at in more detail in subsequent Chapters.

Concurrent with these pressures to change the culture of organizations, globalization and economic forces are pushing organizations to become ever more efficient. This has resulted in Organizational Change becoming big business and there has been a great deal of research and consultation around changing organizations. However, as Beer and Nohria in their book *Breaking the Code of Change* (2000) note, most

change initiatives have a low success rate – they estimate that less than one third achieve any lasting change. In an attempt to bring greater understanding to the whole field, Beer and Nohria (2000) divide organizational change into two different approaches which they call “*Theory E*” and “*Theory O*”. These are guided by different assumptions and are by no means exclusive.

Theory E change has an overtly economic motivation, its purpose is to create economic value. The primary focus is on formal structures and systems and it tends to be driven from the top, with strong central planning and often with considerable help from external consultants. Incentives are used to drive the change. Theory O change is motivated by the need to develop human capacity. The focus is on developing a high-commitment culture, and leadership at all levels takes responsibility for the change. Change tends to be emergent and less use is made of external consultants. The belief is that a healthy learning organization serves ‘shareholder interests’ in the long run. Incentives are used to support the emergent processes of change.

Beer and Nohria believe that a combination of both E and O change is needed. They explore the options of sequentially implementing E and O and the integrated approach. Ideally Beer and Nohria believe that E and O should be integrated, however they recognize that this is more difficult. This approach emphasizes increasing both economic value and developing organizational capabilities. They believe that leadership should be top-down but allow for participation. People at all levels should be heard in the context of a clearly set direction. They point out that very few leaders or managers have the combined skills needed for both E and O.

Other change practitioners bring other formulas, mixtures of Beer and Nohria’s “O” and “E”. Rosenberg (2003) in a paper on bringing about successful change claims that a clear, well-communicated vision, overtly modeled by the leadership, is essential. She also identifies “O” activities such as developing passion in individuals, bringing in balance in all things and developing a learning organization. Kottler (1998) identifies an eight step approach to bringing about change which emphasizes the need for visionary leadership (which need not necessarily be from the ‘top’ as he had found that leaders exist at all levels in the organization). Interestingly he

identifies people who work immediately below the CEO level as those most likely to block change. He suggests that change starts by establishing a sense of urgency and points to the importance of building powerful coalitions which can be with people outside the organization. He stresses that change takes a long time and that it is important to create and celebrate short-term wins, to sustain momentum and to consolidate and institutionalize the new approaches.

Warren Bennis (2000) writing in *Breaking the Code of Change* argued that the idea of top-down leadership is all tied up with the myth of the hero wherein great things are accomplished by larger than life individuals. He states: "*If there is one generalization we can make about leadership and change it is this: No change can occur without willing and committed followers*" (p. 117). McLagan (2003) highlights the importance of creating diverse teams and encouraging mavericks when building a change-friendly organization. She also emphasizes the importance of "*sheltering breakthroughs*", building trust in the organization and making learning a way of life. She identifies changers as energetic, independent people, committed to the organization. These are people who question the system, are impatient, but not put off by resistance. They are willing to go beyond the requirements of their jobs to make a difference but usually do not get formal support until they have proven their ideas. Changers are driven by the needs of the organization, not by rewards or promotion. They are often also driven by a belief or passion (Kotter, 1998; Meyerson and Scully, 1995).

Feminists have contributed to organizational change from both within and outside the institution. Gender equity was their original motivation for change, but feminist epistemology has brought fresh perspectives to all aspects of organizational operation. 'Femocrats' join bureaucracies and operate from within them. They are able to raise women's issues and their very presence alters the mode of bureaucratic operation and changes the terms of the debate. Women femocrats have been active in achieving legislative change in countries like South Africa and Australia. However as Savage and Witz (1992) point out, there is always a danger of them being absorbed into the bureaucracy. Frustration can lead to another option, rejection of the large bureaucracy. Many feminists have found it very difficult to bring about change from within the organization and this results in their moving out, either to

create specific women's units or separate feminist-run organizations. It is interesting to note that in the USA 50% of the CEO's of non-profit organizations are women (Fisher, 2003).

Meyerson and Scully (1995) explore the role of people they identify as "*tempered radicals*" in bringing about change in organizations. In their paper *Tempered Radicalism and the Politics of Ambivalence and Change* they develop from their own and others' experiences the concept of the 'tempered radical'. This is the person within an organization, committed to many of its goals, but torn by conflicting personal ideologies or values which they hold dear. Tempered radicals are often, but not exclusively, from non-dominant groups – women, people of colour, homosexuals. The tempered radical does not easily fit into the dominant culture of the organization and is often on the margins. She has strong personal and professional identities which can pull in different directions in a painful and threatening way. Often the conflicting demands on the individual cause tension or frustration. The tempered radical can play the organizational game, but yet not want to actually be a part of the game.

We find ourselves in the awkward position of trying to master the norms of our profession in order to advance and maintain a foothold inside important institutions, but also trying to resist and change the profession's imperative and focus. (p. 587)

This tension can fuel action and change. As Meyerson and Scully (p. 586) point out, "*Change often comes from the margins of an organization, borne by those who do not fit well*".

Meyerson and Scully (1995) explore the ambivalence of the tempered radical's identity, seeing it both as a strength and a disadvantage. Being the outsider within gives the tempered radical the organizational knowledge of an insider, but the critical approach of the outsider. The insider is positioned to effect change, the outsider has the critical detachment that enables her to identify what needs changing. The tempered radical who has chosen to work within the system might also find herself in a position to modify the more extreme approach of the untempered radical. This puts her in the unenviable position of being criticized by the proponents of the status quo and by those who wish to see real change. Tempered radicals do not have a

single identity, they relate to both sides, and can be judged as hypocritical. This can sometimes lead them to become vague about their identification with different constituencies and lead to a feeling of isolation that can intensify with increasing hierarchical status.

Ironically, just as a tempered radical approaches a higher position from which she hopes to effect change, she experiences more intensely the feelings of isolation that could pull her away from her change agenda into a position of comfortable belonging. (p. 591)

Meyerson and Scully also point out that there are a number of pressures that push the tempered radical deeper into the organization. Use of 'insider' language enables the tempered radical to be heard, however, it brings the risk of losing the 'outsider' identity. The idea of deferring radical activity until one has reached a position of influence seems to make sense, until exposing one's other identity becomes almost impossible. The tempered radical's ambivalence can lead to feelings of guilt, loneliness, self-doubt and loss of self-esteem.

They note that tempered radicals might be part of large collective movements outside their organizations and thus bring radical ideas into the institution. Tempered radicals can also play a strong role in supporting other change agents in the organization. Meyerson and Scully believe that such people represent a unique source of "*vitality, learning and transformation*" (p. 598) much needed by institutions facing the challenges of globalization.

Tempered radicals (who are usually not in positions explicitly charged with change) act as change agents from within the organization in two ways: by what Meyerson and Scully call 'small wins', and by 'local, spontaneous, authentic action'. Small wins involves breaking big issues into more manageable problems and working on each one individually. It means not aiming too high and choosing battles carefully. This approach can often be driven by unexpected opportunities. Local, spontaneous authentic action occurs when the tempered radical speaks her mind, directly expressing her beliefs. Use of language becomes an issue, and the tempered radical needs to use skillfully both the language of the insider and the outsider. Success in either or both these strategies is important to provide the tempered

radical with the sense of achievement she needs in order to continue her dual role in the organization.

Ely and Meyerson build on these ideas and develop “....*A new Framework for Organizational Analysis and Change*” (2000). In this they suggest that change is an incremental, iterative process of critique, narrative revision and experimentation. It starts with questioning deeply held assumptions about work, productivity and effectiveness. Feedback to the organization then subverts prevailing beliefs about the way work is defined, carried out and evaluated. New ideas are experimented with, and those that succeed incrementally change the culture in the organization. Ely and Meyerson believe that their focus on revising narratives is their major contribution of their work to understanding the change process.

Bewailing the slow rate of progress in understanding organizational change, Martin (2000, p. 450) strongly criticizes the lack of a “*testable causal model for why change doesn’t happen now and how to make positive change actually happen*”. He makes an attempt to do this in which he highlights the importance of choices made by individuals at all levels in the organization. He identifies a “*choice cascade*” in which choices made by people higher in the organization influence choices made by people lower, and, ideally, vice versa. He believes that once there is an understanding of why these choices are made it might be possible to influence the choices. He identifies four factors that jointly influence choices. These are the aspirations of the individual and the organization, the insight of the person making the choice (often managers don’t know what they don’t know and much useful data does not make its way up to managers), monetary and non-monetary incentives and rewards for behaviour, and the learning capacity at each level in the organization. This he defines as the ability of members of the organization to detect and correct errors and to seek new insights which would enable them to make better choices. Change requires alteration of the choices made throughout the organization.

The literature on gendered analyses of organizational culture suggests that it is the dominant patriarchal nature of that culture that renders change difficult. In my study it will be interesting to explore the choices that are being made around gender in the institution and what has influenced them. There are suggestions that women might

be in a more powerful position than is generally realized to bring about organizational change as they are well positioned to take on the roles of tempered radicals, mavericks, entrepreneurs, and interactive leaders.

2.4 Gender in Organizations

In this section I shall look briefly at gender as an aspect of organizational culture, including the gendered distribution of the workforce. I follow this by summarizing some of the gendered analyses of ways of working and the literature on the intersection between gender and power in organizations.

Over the last 40 years women have increasingly entered the workforce and participated in bureaucratic hierarchies. However: "*Women populate organizations, but they practically never run them*" (Enomoto, 2000, p. 377, quoting Kanter, 1977) and jobs are vertically and horizontally gender segregated. Men dominate senior leadership and management positions and the more technical areas. Women tend to be found in lower-ranking, supportive jobs (receptionists, assistants) or in positions which are seen to be nurturing and caring (eg nursing, teaching). A recent leader article in the Economist (2005a) points out that little has changed over the past two decades when the term 'glass ceiling' was coined to describe the exclusion of women from senior positions in corporations¹. Wellington, Kropf and Gerkovich (2003) speak not only of 'glass ceilings' that prevent women rising in the organization, but also 'glass walls' that prevent women from working in certain areas. Where this has changed over time, and women have moved into areas that used to be dominated by men, the workplace has tended to devalue those jobs (eg the position of secretary used to be occupied by men prior to the twentieth century). As Linda Silverman (1995, p. 19) wrote:

Traditionally men have set up the rules of the game, and women have not been allowed to play. Even now while women are permitted in the game, the determination of who will be publicly recognized is still largely the prerogative of the influential (predominantly white) men.

¹ The term 'glass ceiling' is used to describe the barriers in the corporate culture and work environment that impede the development and advancement of women (United States Glass Ceiling Commission, 1993).

Despite the rise of the feminist movement over the last 80 years, this situation has not changed much globally. Less than 5% of senior management in the United Kingdom and United States are women and women comprise about 2% of senior management in Australia (Martin and Collinson, 1998). Data from South Africa's 2001 census indicates that 37% of all senior official managerial, legislative, and professional positions in the workforce in South Africa are held by women (Erasmus, 1997). However the 2006 South African Women in Corporate Leadership census reveals that only 16.8% of executive management positions are held by women (Nedbank Group South Africa, 2006). The paucity of women in senior positions is mirrored in higher education.

Ely and Meyerson (2000) suggest that there have been three main approaches to achieving gender equity. The first they term as "*fix the woman*". This sees the woman as an individual responsible for her own advancement, based on merit. Accordingly if you provide extra training to women, they will be better equipped to take senior positions. Institutional policies and practices are not questioned and the women are expected to assimilate with as little disruption as possible. A second approach "*values the feminine*". This involves consciousness raising about the special qualities that women bring to organizations. It has been criticized as reinforcing gender stereotypes. A third approach focuses on the barriers to women's recruitment and promotion through creating equal opportunities. Ely and Meyerson point out that all of these approaches have been based on viewing gender as 'difference' and that although minor progress has been made, there has not been a significant improvement in gender equity. They advocate an approach based on gender as a complex set of social relations enacted across a range of formal and informal social practices in the institution. Gender equity would be achieved through a process whereby people in an organization continuously identify and disrupt oppressively gendered social practices. They call for a need to question assumptions about work and what contributes to organizational and personal success. They believe that organizational transformation is only possible as a result of interventions that specifically subvert existing traditional gender power structures. This approach was also advocated by researchers such as Kettle (1996): "*Equal opportunity policies must shift their focus from procedures and processes to culture and attitudes before barriers can be thoroughly challenged.*" Kettle quotes Franzway

et al (1989, p. 34) as saying “*Reform is not just a matter of changing personnel at the top. It is a matter of unpicking a complex texture of institutional arrangements which intersect with the construction of masculinity and femininity*”. (Kettle, 1996, p. 64)

This movement of women into the workforce has stimulated feminist research into work and the structures of organizations. Savage and Witz (1992) provide an excellent overview of the contribution made by feminist research to understanding organizations. They identify as three of the most important feminist critics of bureaucracy: Rosabeth Moss Kanter, who wrote *Men and Women of the Corporation* in 1977, Kathy Ferguson (*The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy* 1984) and Rosemary Pringle whose book, *Secretaries Talk*, was published in 1989. Kanter exposed how gender permeates corporate bureaucracies which were designed by, and primarily for, men. She saw power differences, not sex differences, as causing inequalities between men and women in organizations and looked forward to the time when women, by gaining power, would be equal to men. Ferguson found the whole bureaucratic structure to be alien to women and suggested that women should develop other organizational forms and ways of doing things. She described feminist ways of organizing as being characterized by a commitment to egalitarian values, without hierarchy and leaders. Pringle's book highlighted discourses of power and sexuality on which gender roles in the workplace are based. Interestingly she points to the power that women can have through sexuality and the ability this gives them to “*disrupt male rationality*” (Savage and Witz, 1992, p. 29).

The importance of individual experience in organizations is highlighted by Höpfl in a paper which contrasts the purposive rationality of the language of change with the individual's experiences of change (Höpfl, 1999). She points out that change literature usually ignores the “*inevitable emotional counterpart to movement, which has to be borne by organisational members*” (p 135). In this she builds on the writings of Julia Kristeva uncovering the potentially disruptive role of the ‘poetic’ in organizations, where the poetic encompasses the individual's experiences and is aligned with the female.

Put simply, women, in Kristeva's analysis, threaten to subvert the symbolic order by liberating the semiotic. The poetic taps the resonances of the semiotic flux. When she argues that women are the silence of the unconscious which precedes discourse, she is saying that

women threaten to disrupt the rational ordering of language, that, as the locus of ambivalence, women threaten to disrupt the culturally constituted symbolic order by not 'knowing their place'. (Höpfl, 1999, p. 136).

2.4.1 Gender as Organizational Culture

Parker (2000, p. 233) sees organizational culture as *"a continually contested process of making claims of difference within and between groups of people who are formally constituted as members of a defined group"*. He points out that these claims are stimulated by ideas from both within and outside the organization and that culture is not unitary and fixed, but varies with time and is shifting and contested. In South Africa there are numerous racial, class, ethnic, religious and other groupings contesting and contributing to greater or lesser degree to the culture of organizations. Even in this complex environment gender is arguably one of the dominant cultural factors. The work of Kanter and Ferguson exposed the masculine nature of organizations, and Cox (1993) clearly makes the case for gender as a cultural category. Ely and Meyerson (1998) point out how bureaucratic organizations in the Western world (and large ex-colonial organizations in South Africa fall into this category) have essentially been created by a relatively homogenous group of people (white males) and that they consequently reflect the values of these white males in all their activities. These values are maintained and re-enforced by policies and practices as well as subtle everyday interactions and behaviours. The essentially white, male values determine what actions are rewarded, which actions are invisible, who is important, who is not. In this way organizations can marginalize whole groups of people and create monocultural organizations despite multicultural work forces.

The masculine nature of organizations highlighted by the feminist writers of the seventies and eighties still describes the organizations of the twenty-first century. Terms such as competitive, risk-taking, analytical, controlled, logical, independent describe both the heroic male and the dynamic work environment. Success for both the hero and the organization are judged in terms of measured output (rank, products, income). Both hero and company are tough, aggressive and wanting to dominate the opposition. The successful organization is a 'well-oiled machine', a

'tightly-run ship' with a strong hierarchical control structure. Collinson and Hearn (1994) suggest a historic movement from private patriarchy in the family where men rule as fathers and husbands, to public patriarchy where men's power is derived largely from their roles in the public world of state and capitalist organizations. Organizations are seen to be imbued with patriarchy that becomes both a dominant feature of their culture and a filter obscuring much of the organizational activity. Accordingly most of what we take as normal in organizations tends to privilege traits that are socially and culturally ascribed to men.

Gherardi (1995) is very clear that gender is a component of organizations and a distinguishing feature of organizational cultures. She describes gender as a "*socio-cultural product*" (p.185), which gives rise to social structures that then reflexively reinforce the construct. Gender operates at the individual level in societies and within organizations. In addition "*[g]ender is an organizing principle and an organizational outcome. Gender characteristics are presupposed, impose on people and exploited for productive ends, and there are organizational dynamics which create them.*" (Gherardi, 1995, p. 185). She emphasizes the need to recognize ambiguity within organizational life, with individuals being simultaneously variously positioned and holding sometimes contradictory beliefs and impressions. Against the masculine nature of the bureaucratic organization she is clear that emotionality and feelings – both usually described as feminine attributes and consequently made invisible - are "*the true glue of organizations*" (Gherardi, 1995, p. 158). She introduces the idea of "*gender citizenship*":

[I]f an organizational culture expresses a gender regime which systematically devalues everything connected with the female, the organization can never become democratic, whatever affirmative action it may introduce, and whatever equal opportunity legislation may be promulgated. I thus began to think in terms of gender citizenship: the right to have gender values respected within a culture that acknowledges all differences. (Gherardi, 1995, p. 9)

Acker and Feuerverger (1996) found in their study of 27 successful women academics in Canada that institutional practices rather than choices made by the women themselves were the cause of inequities experienced. Butler and Landells (1995) highlight institutional culture in an in-depth study of sexual harassment in a British university and they identify patriarchal relations to be the most significant

factor. They found these invisible male/patriarchal assumptions very difficult to challenge and that women often reacted to them by distancing themselves and spending more time with students. Bagilhole (1993, p. 272) reached the same conclusion in her study of 43 women in a British university.

We must stop looking for possible deficiencies or deficits in women themselves and see it as a problem for the universities, placed fully and squarely on their shoulders. It is important to recognise the part played by institutional factors in the process of excluding women from full participation and success in the academic profession.

Walker comes to a similar conclusion in her study of women on senior academic committees in a South African university (Walker, 1997).

2.4.2 Gendered ways of working

Numerous authors have distinguished between masculine and feminine ways of working and the respective abilities and skills that men and women bring to the workplace.

In the early 1990s Rosener's much quoted paper on "*Ways Women Lead*" (1990) highlighted the distinctions between the ways men and women describe their leadership styles. Her survey of men and women leaders for the International Women's Forum in 1989 found that men tended to view their jobs as a series of transactions between subordinates. Performance was rewarded or punished, and positional power and authority were important. This she identified as "*transactional*" leadership. Women, on the other hand, were much more interactive in their leadership style. Subordinates were encouraged to transform their own self-interest into the interests of the group. Participation was encouraged, power and information shared and employees were energized and excited about their work. Women leaders believed that getting employees to contribute and feel powerful and important was a win-win situation for both the employees and the organization. Rosener described this style of leadership practiced by the women as "*interactive leadership*". Power tended to come from personal characteristics such as charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work and personal contacts, rather than from position. Many of the participants described their participatory style as coming 'naturally', but

admitted to using it consciously to achieve specific ends. They saw their leadership as transformational. Rosener believed that this use of an interactive leadership style has its roots in the socialization of women and their different career paths from those of men. Rosener and subsequently others (eg in South Africa de la Rey, 2005) have highlighted the value of this added diversity in leadership style, particularly in a changing world.

In Rosener's survey men and women described themselves as having an equal mix of traits that are considered feminine, masculine and gender-neutral. However she cautioned against linking interactive leadership directly to being female. There are men who use a transformational style and women who get into leadership positions by wielding power in a similar way to men. As other authors have noted this can be a double-edged sword as aggressive males tend to be described as successful, heroic, capable and strong, whereas women using similar tactics have been labeled as bitchy, pushy, domineering, and uncaring. (Interestingly only one of the women leaders Rosener interviewed was from a large, traditional organization. The rest were from medium-sized companies experiencing fast growth and change. This led her to postulate that growth and change in an organization is an important factor in creating opportunities for women. I would suggest that this also reflects the inability of large organizations to nurture or accept women leaders.)

Masculine behaviour is characterized as being competitive, controlling, emotionally-detached, defensive, risk-taking (Martin and Collinson, 1998; Chesterman, Ross-Smith and Peters, 2004). Words such as logical, impersonal, independent, objective, explicit, action-orientated, and analytic are used to describe men. Men are seen to engage in contest practices such as self-promotion, intra-group competition, and exploitation of others' labour and contributions. Men value rising above others in rank and pay (Martin and Collinson, 1998).

Collinson and Hearn (1994) identify five discourses and practices of masculinity in organizations. These are:

1. Authoritarianism (intolerance of dissent or difference, dictatorial control, unquestioning obedience)

2. Paternalism (in which power is exercised by emphasizing the moral basis of cooperation and there is a protective nature to their authority, importance of personal trust relations, benevolence, self-discipline, wisdom)
3. Entrepreneurialism (the hard-nosed competitive approach, targets, profits and economic efficiency, working long hours)
4. Informalism (in which informal work networks are based on shared masculine values and interests – humour, sport, cars, women, male homo-sociability)
5. Careerism (preoccupation with hierarchical advance, long working hours, extensive travel and dependence on wives to manage domestic and familial matters).

Collinson and Hearn (1994) suggest that there are different kinds of men with different motives and tensions operating in organizations, but they also draw attention to what they describe as the fragility and precariousness underpinning and surrounding masculine identities. Among threats they identify are new technologies, unemployment, feminism and equal opportunity rhetoric, and the intensified class and status divisions within organizational hierarchies. Collinson and Hearn (1994) also remind us of the importance of paid work as a central source of masculine identity, status and power.

This is contrasted with the feminine way of working that emphasizes superior relational skills. Women as a group are seen to be empathetic, able to express vulnerability, and emotion, be better at communication and have a more consultative, democratic style (Thomas and Ely, 1996; de la Rey, 2005). Words used to describe the feminine way include community, cooperation, empowering subordinates, nurturing and caring for associates (Martin and Collinson, 1998). A number of authors write about their perceptions of women leaders and managers. Chesterman, Ross-Smith and Peters (2004) describe women executives as showing more 'emotional intelligence'. Johnson (1993) outlines a feminist approach to academic leadership. This includes skills described above, but also emphasizes sensitivity to women's issues and perspectives, lack of concern for aggrandizing power, and sharing. Holloway (1991) sites the advantages of women managers as being their superior interpersonal skills and their ability to exercise power through non-traditional means. Blackmore and Sachs (2001) suggest that in Australia, women Vice

Chancellors are being appointed for their specific female leadership skills and being used as change agents. Yeatman also writes about this in the Australian context.

They [women] are encouraged to use their outsider positioning, their task orientation...and their vested interest in the new ways of doing things to 'call' all the fustian, patriarchal inefficiencies of the old institution culture. They are used as the institutional 'breath of fresh air'.
(Yeatman as quoted in Hearn 2001, p. 83).

Feminist ways of organizing tend to be democratic, eschewing hierarchies. Whilst many of these are very successful the viability of this appears to depend on the size of the organization, and McDonald, Sprenger and Dubel (1997) suggest that there is evidence that non-hierarchical structures do not really work when an organization gets bigger.

Joyce Fletcher (1998) introduces the term 'relational practice'

'to expand the gendered definition of work. Relational practice is a way of working that comes from a relational or "*stereotypically feminine belief system*" (p. 163).

Fletcher and Jacques (1999, p. 1) explain the basis of their research as follows:

...organizations implicitly privilege traits that have been culturally ascribed to males and identified as masculine, such as independence, rationality, and individuality, while de-emphasizing other, equally important aspects of work that are more relational and have been culturally ascribed to females. From this perspective, organizational efforts to move from traditional to more relational modes of organizing can be thought of as efforts to move from a stereotypically masculine world view to one that is more stereotypically feminine.

They identify relational practice as requiring skills that are not normally associated with organizational effectiveness: empathy, an ability to admit mistakes with no loss to self esteem, emotional competence, an ability to admit one's vulnerability, openness to change and to being influenced by others, the ability to engage the synergy of thinking, acting and feeling, and an ability to operate in a context of interdependence. Relational practice is based on the premise that work gets done more effectively in an environment of growth and connection. They point out that when performed competently, the work of relational practice becomes invisible, as much of it is preventative and associated with ensuring that things operate smoothly. They contend that the gendered nature of most organizations tends to actively make relational practice work disappear, and that this has implications for transformation.

Fletcher (1998, p. 182) states: “..organizations intent on transforming will be unable to do so in any long-lasting way without engaging these patriarchal forces”.

In addition to distinguishing between masculine and feminine behaviours, distinctions have been drawn between the ways men and women think. Whereas male reasoning is described as starting with abstract principles, narrowing down by discarding anything deemed irrelevant, female reasoning starts with experience and reasons outwards. Fisher (2003) describes women's thinking as 'web thinking'. She believes that women collect more data, put it into more complex patterns, see more alternative outcomes, weigh more variables to make decisions, and that they tend to synthesize. This she contrasts with men's thinking which she calls 'step thinking' in which men tend to compartmentalize, get rid of any data they regard as extraneous, focus on what they think is important and take a more causal linear pathway to the goal. Whilst both types of thinking are needed, Fisher indicates that she believes that web thinking brings skills that are increasingly needed in our complex, changing world.

However just as Collinson and Hearn identify different masculine discourses in organizations it is important to bear in mind that women interact differently with the workplace and should not be essentialized or treated as homogeneous. Gherardi (1995) rejects the rigid duality of masculine and feminine which she feels obscures the variability of human character and ignores the differences across time and different cultures. Alvesson and Billing (1997) question whether in talking about masculinity and femininity one is talking about a social reality or merely a tool of the researcher. They point out that feminist research describes the hegemonic male as independent, risk-taking, aggressive, heterosexual and rational. Why only these? Why not also reliable, mentally-balanced breadwinner, sexually attractive, wealthy, physically strong? They caution against linking masculine and feminine traits too closely with men and women. Many men are caring, thoughtful, good team players and women can be aggressive, selfish ('queen-bee' syndrome), and competitive. They also wonder how constant these traits are across time and cultures, and point out that whilst a feminist researcher might think that a male manager is tough and aggressive, a physical labourer is more likely to think him soft and weak. *“One should always raise the question, ‘For whom does something appear as a form of*

masculinity or femininity?" (Alvesson and Billing, 1997, p. 100). Cox (1993) also points out that in many cases the behaviours assigned as either masculine or feminine may not be obvious as people in organizations have learned to suppress them in order to fit in with the dominant organizational culture.

Interpretation of gendered ways of working is clearly influenced by an essentialist approach to gender and it is important to recognize that the masculine - feminine binary is modified both by context and individual positionality. Factors such as race, class, age and status influence the power individuals have in different environments, and the varying environments themselves provide modifying contexts within which different ways of working can be privileged.²

Whilst accepting these cautions, I believe that gender is a useful tool in analyzing the university as an empowering or disempowering organization. Gender relationships are essentially power relationships and the effectiveness of any change agent is related to her or his access to power. In addition, awareness of gender-related abilities, whether socially constructed or biologically determined, provides insight into tools that change agents might use in bureaucratic organizations.

2.3.4 Gender and Power in Organizations

Gherardi describes gender as "*a pervasive symbol of the power relation*" (1995, p. 17). Foucault's studies showed that a key factor in changing the structure of organizations is power. Power essentially brings two kinds of capacities: access to resources, information and support necessary to do the task, and the ability to get cooperation in doing what is necessary. In this section I look briefly at power and the relationship between power and gender in organizations and how gender is embedded in different power relations. It is worth noting that a quirk of our democratic society is to stigmatize the overt seeking of power. Consequently people who 'have' power tend to make it look natural, inevitable and invisible, downplaying it while covertly exploiting it. Also, no group willingly relinquishes power.

² E.g. Women moving into senior positions are often accused of "becoming one of the boys", as they modify their work style to match the new environment.

Jean Lipman-Blumen in her book *Gender Roles and Power* (1984, p. 6) defined power as “*the process whereby individuals or groups gain or maintain their capacity to impose their will on others.*” Power is not an attribute of the powerful, or a commodity, but a process characterized by subtle negotiation and re-negotiation. Power is exercised through the control of resources. Lipman-Blumen links the desire for power and the need for control to the uncertainty of life and the desire to overcome the helplessness this invokes. She suggests that if we exert power over others, we believe that we are controlling our own destiny. Power relationships are encased in social relationships. At the societal level, laws, policies and military might maintain power. At the individual level power is exerted by using intelligence, intuition, charm, deception and sexuality. Rao and Kelleher (2000) point out how the perception of power being a limited commodity (if you have more I have less) silences alternative voices, including gender perspectives.

Lipman-Blumen also draws attention to the role that the powerless play in maintaining the position of the powerful. The exercise of power requires the complicity of the less powerful, a factor that can give the less powerful more power than they often appreciate. Mählick (2001, p. 187) describes how this complicity is used to produce and replicate gender relations which trap both men and women in the environment but in different power positions. In social relations, power-differentiated groups often separate out into self-regulating elites (for example of race or class) but, as Lipman-Blumen points out, women in societies cannot do this, and thus are often unaware of their lesser powerful position. Miles (1985) sees women as the largest ‘out-group’ in human society.

A number of different types of power have been identified. These include:

- Positional power: This is hierarchical in nature and comes as a consequence of a specific rank or position.
- Expert power: This is earned by knowing more than others about a specific topic. Expert power plays a significant role in the relationship between academics and support staff in a university.

- Personal power: This comes with charisma, self-confidence, inter-personal skills, and as a result of achievements.
- Coercive power: This is obtained by having control or a hold over others. Those in coercive power can reward or punish, can keep a secret or tell, hire or fire.
- Connections: This type of power is obtained by knowing the “right” people and by being networked.

An individual may use one or more of these types of power. Miles (1985) claims that power is masculine in every way and that the feminine is the very antithesis to power. I believe that this statement needs revisiting. From the discussion of gender in organizations above, it would appear that the types of power more available to men are positional and coercive power, but that women tend to make use of connections and develop personal power. Rita Mae Kelly in her book *The Gendered Economy* (1991) supports this contention (Chapter 6). She points out that studies have shown that there are no significant gender differences in power-drive, power enjoyment, power anxiety or power style between men and women, and that the only difference that has been detected is an ambivalence towards holding power. She claims that women view power as a means to promote change, whereas men tend to view power as a means of having influence over other people – ‘power to’ as against ‘power over’. Martin and Collinson (1998) suggest that men and women have different amounts and types of power due to gender and sexuality distinctions, not only official position. There is also a strong relationship between power and sexuality in organizations (Hearn, 1996). Race, ethnicity and age are also overlaid onto official power structures.

Amy Allen (2005) provides a comprehensive review of feminist perspectives of power. She identifies three main feminist conceptualizations of power: power as domination, power as a resource, and power as empowerment. She points out how the concept of power as domination has been favoured by radical and social feminists and those taking the phenomenological and post-structural feminist approaches. This view perceives power in relation to domination, using words such as ‘patriarchy’ and ‘oppression’ and draws parallels with the master/slave relationship. Power is seen as ‘power over’ and part of a repressive relationship. Many of these ideas of power have been strongly influenced by Marxist theory and

by Foucault's analyses of power. Liberal feminists on the other hand tend to view power as a resource which can be used for social good, but which is unequally distributed between men and women. An alternative view of power as empowerment is proposed by feminists such as Luce Irigaray. This perceives women as using power differently, in ways that enhance the power of other. Allen (p. 14) describes this concept of power as having "*the capacity to transform and empower oneself and others*".

Politics is the art of keeping power. All big organizations are political. Some political activity is overt, but much of it takes place in the form of micropolitics. Hoyle in 1982 (p. 87) described micropolitics as "*an organizational underworld which we all recognize and in which we all participate*" (quoted by Morley, 1999, p.4). It encompasses hidden conflicts and connections, competing interests, resentments, tensions and personal strategies to resist or effect change. It is about influence, networks, and coalitions. It can be overt and rough using such methods as abuse or bullying, or subtle, elusive and confusing. Morley, who uses micropolitical analysis in much of her feminist research to unearth gendered power relationships (Morley 1999; 2000; 2001) notes that micropolitics "*has been read as a subtext of organisational life in which conflicts, tensions, resentments, competing interests and power imbalances influence everyday transactions in institutions.*" (1999, p. 4) She looks at how power is exercised, rather than just possessed, and looks at the numerous little daily practices and processes that combine to undermine women in the academy where she sees gendered power complicated by the strength of expert power. Summing up the findings of the recent study of gender equity in five Commonwealth universities she emphasizes how "*gendered power relations symbolically and materially construct and regulate women's everyday experiences in higher education*" (Morley, 2006, p. 550). In analyzing the data around women change agents I will attempt to identify micropolitical activity as part of the analysis of power interactions in the organization. In doing so, I plan to make visible some of the power that women are strategically using in organizations, as well as some of the means being used to disempower them.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter I have looked at the changing views of organizations, from being monolithic, mechanistic producers of products to being complex organisms needing to respond to the increasing diversity and complexity of their environment. A review of some of the literature on bringing about change or transformation in large organizations has shown how difficult this is and how leadership of change comes from a spectrum of individuals within an organization (*"the possibility that staff at all levels can be powerful actors for change – not only appointed leaders"* (Rao and Kelleher, 2000, p. 78)), and often, as McLagan (2002) pointed out, from people without formal management responsibility, people she identified as 'mavericks'. The masculine hegemony in organizations would suggest that change is led by the heroic leader, someone with vision, bravery, strength and forcefulness. Organizational change research has revealed the importance of other skills often associated with the feminine, such as intuition, sensitivity, persistence, humility and the relational practice Fletcher and Jacques (1999) write about.

Across the capitalist world organizations are gendered with respect to the distribution of their employees with most women being in the lower ranks and often in jobs associated with service and nurturing. Despite the pressures for diversity and equity, the position of women working in organizations remains a contradictory one. At one level their presence is welcomed as they fulfill the support roles that society expects of them. However, when a woman strives to reach more a senior, influential position in an organization, she is likely to encounter an often irrational, invisible but powerful resistance. A number of researchers suggest that this is a consequence of the dominant patriarchal culture of large bureaucratic organizations and highlight the importance of gender as a component of institutional culture. Gender is recognized to be a strong determinant of the power relationships influencing political and micropolitical interactions in the organization in a way which serves to disempower women.

Against the background of this gendered institutional culture much research has been done which identifies more masculine and more feminine ways of working, and there is a suggestion that in the current rapidly changing organizational environment,

those skills associated with women become the more valuable. My research on gender-based change initiated by women has the potential to provide insights as to whether this is in fact the perception within my case institution and whether the institution is able to capitalize on this skill resource.

In the next Chapter I focus on higher education as a specific organizational environment, one that is under great pressure to diversify. I explore the impact of the forces for change particularly on higher education in Africa and, as background to my case institution, introduce the issues confronting higher education in South Africa.

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CHAPTER 3

3. TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter I have given an overview of organizations and organizational change. I highlighted the gendered nature of organizations and how this influences power interactions. I also explored the perceptions of the different skills brought by men and women to the organization and the possible consequences this might have for effecting change. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are a specific subset of organizations. Like other large bureaucracies they have been affected by the changing socio-economic environment and the forces of globalization in particular. Both the purpose and practice of higher education is changing. Blackmore and Sachs (2000, p. 14) go as far as to say: "*The university many of us knew when we began our academic careers is certainly dead.*" To many people in HEIs these changes are traumatic and there is also evidence of a strong gender impact of many of the new ways of doing things. In this Chapter I will briefly outline some of the global pressures on higher education and how these have affected HEI's in a number of countries, with a particular focus on Africa. In order to provide background to the gendered climate in higher education institutions I look at the factors influencing women working in the sector and explore some of the gendered impacts of globalization. This is followed by a more detailed look at higher education in South Africa and the local imperatives for change and transformation.

3.2 Globalization and Higher Education

Over the past 1100 years universities have changed little. From the early Arab universities in Africa to the Western universities on which most of the modern universities are modeled the university has been the preserve of the male elite, with learning seen as a masculine prerogative. Universities as we know them developed

in Europe from cathedral and monastery schools and trained young men for the church or professions such as law and medicine. During the Renaissance a renewed interest in Greek and Roman learning led to a broadening of fields of study to include the liberal arts, but essentially, as institutions, universities remained remarkably unchanged over 1000 years. This conservatism has been highlighted by many authors (eg Evans, 1995; Heward, 1996; Morley and Walsh, 1996; Petersen and Gravett, 2000) and powerfully summed up in a quote from the 1990 Hansard Society Commission report, cited by Davis and Holloway (1995, p.12) who lament that universities, “...institutions dedicated to the unraveling of truth are themselves still wrapped in the myths of the past”.

Manuel Castells (Castells, 2001) has identified the four functions of Higher Education (HE) as:

1. generating ideology (despite their ideology of being ideology-free)
2. selecting the elite in our industrialized society (the strength of family heritage having been eroded)
3. generating new knowledge (especially in our technological age)
4. training the bureaucracy whether it be the church bureaucracy as in the past, or the state and professional bureaucracies of modern societies.

Castells points out that the importance of any one of these four functions has varied over historical time.

During the twentieth century higher education became increasingly important as a generator of new knowledge and a means of selecting the elite in our industrialized society. Higher education came to be seen as a public good; it was important to educate the population, and in many countries the state provided free university education. As modern society became more technologically based, it became clear that a highly educated population provided a competitive advantage. New universities, polytechnics, fachhochschule and technikons were founded in countries all over the world. During this period women increasingly entered higher education and opportunities were opened up to bright students irrespective of class or gender. Universities also grew to play an important role as social critics and were often the centre of ferment or protest.

Ozga and Deem (2000, p. 141) point to the “*global crisis of capital of the late 1970s*” as the initial forcing factor commencing the pressures on the political economy and eventually the higher education arena. They see the resultant shift from Fordist production regimes to post-Fordist regimes of flexible accumulation as having a major impact on what was required from higher education. Educational outcomes had to address national economic priorities, a skilled, professional workforce was needed, and, in the quest for accountability, the state required a more corporate managerial approach from the higher education sector. As Blackmore and Sachs wrote (2000, p. 1):

Organizational change theorists and economic rationalists would tell us that universities, as we knew them ten years ago, were past their use-by date, unable to deal with the rapid and radical changes required by postmodern times and globalization.

Globalization, which Zeleza (2006) somewhat irreverently describes as “*the discursive craze of our times*”, is seen to encompass many of the forcing factors for change in higher education. Moja and Cloete (2001) in defining globalization clearly distinguish between globalization and internationalization. The latter refers to relationships and interactions between autonomous nation-states that retain considerable control over policies and actions. Globalization describes “*global competitiveness between great market blocs and intensified collaboration and competition in the emergence of new regional blocs which are not only economic, but also cultural and educational.*” (Moja and Cloete, 2001, p. 244). With globalization the state has little or no control; the private sector and economic practices of the regional bloc or economic or cultural group shape actions and policies. Globalization brings deregulation of financial controls by the state, the opening of markets, increased competition and universal requirements of efficiency and accountability. Moja and Cloete (2001) see globalization breaking down boundaries between the state, the market and education. One of the most striking things about globalization is its inevitability. As Castells says: “*..you cannot be indifferent to globalisation: you are either in or you are trying to get in. If you stay out, survival is what you are heading for – if you are lucky.*” (Castells 1998, quoted by Moja and Cloete 2001, p. 250).

Zeleza (2002) presents a useful summary of the impacts of globalization on higher education under six trends (*“the six Cs”*). These are:

- Corporatization of management
- Collectivization of access
- Commercialization of learning
- Commodification of knowledge
- Computerization of education
- Connectivity of institutions.

In a subsequent essay Zeleza (2006) added a further ‘C’ to the list: Corrosion of academic freedom. I will briefly discuss the globalization of higher education using Zeleza’s ‘C’s as a framework.

Free-market capitalism is remodeling education as an economic investment. Its role as a social good or human right is being eclipsed by the need to meet specific national needs. Funds invested in education are expected to provide a measurable return. This is demanding from universities as public institutions greater accountability in both management and the output of products (students, quality of teaching and research). Universities have been pressured to replace their more collegial approach to management with corporate, centralized structures. New managerialism has resulted in universities employing ‘executive directors’ with salaries related to those in the corporate sector rather than the academic sector. Vice Chancellors are seen as CEOs. HEIs have strategic plans, cost centre accounting, and increasingly use consultants to manage projects. Academics are encouraged to be entrepreneurial and the institution is required to become more efficient, saving money and sourcing new funds, so as to become more productive. There is an emphasis on counting and measuring productivity. That which cannot be measured becomes increasingly irrelevant.

Zeleza’s collectivization of access refers to the pressures for the massification of higher education. Not only is there social need to provide HE to the growing number of young people who desire it, regardless of affordability, but there is a demand for continuing education to re-skill the workforce and to meet the demands of the knowledge-based economy. Academics are teaching larger and larger classes and

are being asked to provide extra courses (often part-time or after hours) for non-traditional learners.

The trend towards the commercialization of higher education encompasses both the public institutions and the growing number of private providers, many of them small specialist colleges set up to meet the changing needs of the knowledge economy. Some of these are directly linked to industry and a number of large transnational corporations have set up their own 'universities'. Public HE institutions are increasingly providing courses for private fee paying students. At universities such as Makerere in Uganda, these courses are offered in the evenings in addition to the normal schedule of courses the academic staff have to offer. Other models provide sufficient income to cover additional contract salary costs and to subsidize activities of the public institution. The offerings of English as a Foreign Language in Australia are examples of how profitable this can be. As higher education institutions compete in the global free market for traditional and non-traditional students and research contracts, marketing and image management become increasingly important and most higher education institutions are now putting considerable resources towards 'selling' their 'products'.

In referring to the commodification of knowledge, Zeleza points to the preoccupation with intellectual property, the growth of commercial enterprises within universities, contract research, and the sponsorship of buildings and academic chairs.

Blackmore and Sachs (2000, p. 2) describe this as "*new and more dangerous liaisons ...being struck with industry.*" The increase in student fees and the concept of 'user pays' are part of this commodification. Many countries have systems of international fees by means of which they are selling education on the global market. As an extreme example, higher education is one of the largest export sectors in Australia.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is an integral part of globalization. ICT has the potential to alter radically the way we teach and whom we teach. ICT brings new pedagogical possibilities for course presentation. It also opens up global markets for education products as on-line courses can be offered anywhere in the world. A number of e-universities are being established offering courses worldwide.

Most of these have a strong profit motive, but there are also initiatives such as the African Virtual University sponsored by the World Bank. Whilst this has potential benefits, it also raises questions about cultural imperialism and standards. Moja and Cloete (2001) point out that 70 percent of internet distance education originates in the USA.

ICT also brings the connectivity Zeleza writes about. This connectivity brings the possibility of innovative international collaboration in research, teaching, and sharing resources such as libraries and computing power. A number of powerful international educational and research consortia have been established, reminiscent of multinational corporations. This has tremendous benefit for those who have the connectivity, but those who do not cannot keep up the levels of research productivity demanded by the competitive academic environment, and the intellectual gap between ICT-rich and ICT-poor institutions grows. These negative impacts of academia's increased reliance on connectivity have the potential to deplete and devalue smaller national efforts. As Moja and Cloete (2001, p. 249) state:

They [First World academics] show no compunction towards their fellow Third World academic colleagues who may be losing not only their students, but also their jobs and ultimately their institutions. This raises the question as to whether these structural changes may lead to the end of collegiality and international 'solidarity' amongst academics. It will in all likelihood also perpetuate the other phenomenon associated with globalisation: increasing inequality, both between academics within institutions and between academics in different institutions and countries.

Zeleza (2006) further sees globalization 'corroding' academic freedom through stresses imposed on student access, the devaluing of less-obviously applicable disciplines such as some of the humanities, the impact of industry on research and publishing as exercised through control of funding, through erosion of tenure and the growth of business management models, and through the dilution of institutional traditions.

In concluding this brief outline of globalization in higher education and before moving to look at higher education in the African context, it is important to note the differential impact of globalization across the global development divide.

Globalization can be viewed as a form capitalist colonialism, a way of the 'North'

imposing control over the 'South'. Zeleza describes how many African intellectuals have perceived globalization negatively as an imposed ideology and writes that *"...the globalization industry has privileged perspectives and positions from the global North with the global South peeping in from the sidelines..."* (Zeleza, 2006, p. 2). Capitalist globalization consequently has the potential to influence differentially universities in developed and the developing world, to the detriment of the latter.

3.3 Higher Education in Africa

The recent history of higher education in sub-Saharan Africa is dominated by external intervention. Colonial occupiers established colleges or outposts of European universities whose key functions were to induct the elite into Western ideas of citizenship and to train young men to work in state bureaucracies. Universities performed a key function in legitimating state authority and were essentially Western imports that had little empathy with local society. Post-independence the new nation states tended to see higher education as a key part of their national development. The university was seen to be the pinnacle of education, producing professionals, useful knowledge and technologies, and promoting social equity and economic development. New universities were established all over the continent. In 1960 there were 52 HEIs in Africa, today there are estimated to be 316, excluding technical and vocational colleges (Mama, 2003). However the new national governments were not able to find the necessary finances to support or fully develop these new universities and increasingly control shifted to international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who provided financing. Loan conditions became increasingly stringent and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1980s resulted in a significant reduction of in social spending in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Structural Adjustment Program demanded increased efficiencies, cost sharing and decreased spending in higher education. Caffentzis (2000) describes how, by making this reduction in spending the centerpiece of its education policy, the World Bank crippled higher education institutions in Africa. Students could not afford to pay fees, infrastructure deteriorated, and staff left the continent for greener pastures in the USA or Europe. Currently Africa has the lowest enrollment of students in the world at 2% of the

population. Financial control also gave funders intellectual control of universities, with research being almost exclusively donor driven. Recently there are indications of a shift in policy with the World Bank and a number of donor agencies recognizing that higher education is not a luxury but an essential pillar of social and economic development. Mama (2003, p. 3) describes this as signaling “ *the targeting of African universities as a key site for a new round of intervention, in the name of globalisation.*” The agenda, she contends, is again more likely to be “*the “Washington consensus” of the day*” than any concern for the disempowered people of Africa.

African HEIs have not been shielded from the forces of globalization described above. Superimposed on their history of colonial and donor intervention, have been the pressures for corporatization, accountability, massification, and socio-economic responsiveness. Governments increasingly demand that universities produce graduates to meet national skills needs and knowledge that will build economies. There is emphasis on science, technology, and economics to the detriment of broad knowledge production and issues of social accountability and justice. ICT and connectivity, other key aspects of globalization, present tantalizing possibilities which are beyond the budgets of most institutions. The dreams of shared libraries on line, the possibilities of jointly developing and delivering coursework with other institutions in other countries, or even simple, reliable access to the world wide web are still far from being realized. At the same time the increased mobility and connectivity are compounding the brain drain and have the potential to take students away from local universities. Not only can a student now take a course from an American university from her home in Africa, but private education providers are viewing the great demand for higher education in Africa as a new market. Dozens of new private universities have been established over the past 10 years, many of them recruiting staff from the already depleted public universities.

3.4 Women in Higher Education

Women have increasingly entered the global higher education workforce, but tend to be concentrated in lower ranking, often contract positions. Morley’s figures in the

United Kingdom (Morley, 2001), show 35% of lecturers and 10% of full professors to be women, with women being 33% more likely to be on contract posts. In Australia women comprise only 15% of the staff above senior lecturer level (Currie and Thiele, 2001). Across the 35 Commonwealth countries surveyed by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, only 22.6% of the posts senior lecturer level and above were filled by women (Singh, 2003). Recent accurate data for developing countries is difficult to obtain but Morley et al (2006) present data on the percentage of women vice chancellors in selected Commonwealth countries. These show the degree to which women in African and Asian countries (Nigeria 2,5%, Tanzania 10%, Uganda 0%, Sri Lanka 5,9% and India 4,1%) are under-represented at this senior level. Mama (2002, 2003) also describes the under-representation of women as intellectual leaders in African universities with women comprising fewer than 6% of the professors. Singh (2003, p. 41) states: "*Generally, women's status in African universities left much room for improvement.*" Data from the South African Department of Education for 2005 (Pers. Comm., 27 September 2006) showed that 18.5% of full professors were women but that women made up 51.5% of the lecturers and junior lecturers. Data collected in early 2007 (Riordan, Pers. Comm.) on senior positions in South African higher education institutions shows the persistence of this gender inequity with only 3 of the 23 universities having women vice chancellors (see Appendix 8). As in the corporate world, there is both a vertical and horizontal stratification of women. Researchers have drawn attention not only to the 'glass ceiling' in higher education preventing women from achieving their promotional aspirations, but also to the 'glass walls' which limit the disciplines and areas in which they work (Goode & Bagilhole, 1998, Morley, 2000), with women being most severely under-represented in the sciences and engineering. It has also been noted by Lawler (1999), Hearn (2001) and others that the more 'prestigious' the institution the fewer women there are likely to be in senior positions.

There have been many studies analyzing this 'institutionalized sexism'³. These are complex and interactive but can be broadly grouped into social factors, structural

³ Not only are women under-represented in academic and management positions in higher education, but studies world-wide also show that over their career women earn less than their male counterparts, due to factors such as being in contract posts and delayed promotion. In spite of this, research has shown that women academics on average work longer hours than men (Morley & Walsh, 1995, Currie, Harris and Thiele, 2000).

issues, personal psychological barriers, and climate issues, all of which contribute to higher education functioning “as a structure for reproducing power relations rather than challenging them” (Morley 1996, p. 4). I will briefly outline each of these as they provide insight to the gendered climate within the higher education sector.

Social factors

In most societies women are socialized into fulfilling the caring, reproductive roles – the unpaid work identified by the early feminists. During the twentieth century women increasingly entered the formal workforce, resulting in their having dual, often conflicting responsibilities. For example, Currie quotes Probert’s 1998 study of 3872 academics in Australia which shows that 4.3% of men as against 50% of women were the main carers in their families (Currie et al., 2000). This both puts added stresses on women with respect to time management and prioritizing their activities, and also results in women being primarily seen by society as carers rather than professionals. This can include the attitude of line managers, colleagues, students and even one’s own family. It also causes conflict within the working woman herself with respect to her identity, and contributes to structural barriers to advancement (see below). The paucity of role models and mentors in the workplace serves to reinforce these roles that society has assigned to women.

Structural barriers

Dines (1993) in the UNESCO report on “*Women in Higher Education Management*” highlights the limited access of girl students to higher education in many countries resulting in a small pool of women from which to draw academics and managers. Although bringing more young women into higher education might increase the overall percentage of women employed in higher education, Heward (1996) points out that the assumption that an increased number of female students will result in an increased number of women in senior positions does not hold. Allen and Castleman (2001) in their paper on “*Fighting the Pipeline Fallacy*” suggest that belief in the pipeline arguments is simplistic and represents a danger to achieving gender equity in higher education as it draws attention away from the real causes of inequity.

The resultant lack of a critical mass of senior women and supportive networks (Bagilhole, 1993) adds to the isolation of women. The 'old boys club' is perceived to play a very important role in the career development of males in the academy (Nicholson, 1996). Heward (1996) believes that these networks become increasingly important in the mid- and later stages of a career.

The continuous privileging of men and hegemonic masculinities and devaluation of women and femininities have cumulative effects on the careers of individual men and women, causing increasing divergence most visible among the older age groups. (Heward, 1996, p. 21)

Women's academic advancement is impacted both by the roles that society has assigned to women and by bias in applying advancement criteria. Many authors have pointed to the incompatibility of an academic career path with the interruptions women experience due to reproduction and pastoral caring. The time a bright young graduate is expected to travel and take up a postdoctoral position coincides with a young woman's reproductive prime. Not only does the absence of this expected academic experience affect the resumé of the individual woman, but collectively the removal of competition (young reproductive women) increases the opportunities for young men. This clearly affects an academic career, reducing opportunities for research and networking with colleagues. Collinson and Hearn (1994) draw attention to the importance of conferences not only as a venue for academic rationality but also as an arena for masculine competitive display. Many women also have their research time reduced by taking on more than their fair share of teaching and student support. This sense of duty also extends to committee work as women are often prepared to sit on (usually less-influential, routine) committees. Acker and Feuerverger (1996) suggest that women see caring for others as part of their identity and not something that is forced upon them. There has also been attention focused on gender bias in applying academic advancement criteria such as peer reviewing (Billard, 1993; Wenneras and Wold, 2001; Barres, 2006). Kettle (1996, p. 52) sums up the situation when she claims that the academic environment "*provid[es] men with more credentials*" than women.

Personal and psychological barriers

Brown talks about the dualities in the women's roles - mind/body, public/private, reason/emotion causing tension between their female and their academic identities

(Brown, 2000). Some authors have suggested that women have psychological or cultural barriers to accepting responsibility (Dines, 1993). A number of authors talk about the importance of self-confidence in advancing a career in academia (Heward, 1996; Brown, 2000,). Heward believes that self-confidence and positive self-evaluation of one's academic ability from an early stage is essential in developing a successful academic career. However, being assertive is criticized as being unfeminine. Acker and Feuerverger (1996) found that women valued cooperation and caring and disliked competition and individual assessment. Brown quotes Caplan (1993) as saying that women are: "*..often blamed for their own insecurity, but in fact female socialization to feel inadequate and the very real sexist aspects one finds in most academic settings are the real culprits*" (Brown, 2000, n.p.).

Climate issues

Despite positive policies and leadership commitment to gender equity, research such as that of Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005) in their study of six universities in the United Kingdom draws attention to the degree to which micropolitical interactions undermine overt institutional intent and negatively influence women's experience of climate. Lawler (1999, n. p.) finds evidence that many of the women in academia feel "*desperately unhappy*", an attitude which can easily be transmitted to their students. He also found that the women felt like outsiders, something supported by Blackmore and Sach's study in Australia (Blackmore and Sachs, 2000). Here the women leaders they interviewed displayed a sense of ambivalence in that they never felt as if they participated fully in the academic environment, nor could they buy in to the institutional management structures. Many women found the requirements of academic identity conflicted with the value they placed on teaching, service and care (Blackmore and Sachs, 2001). Other authors have interpreted this differently suggesting that women's values do not necessarily conform with the excessive time demanded by universities as 'greedy' institutions (Currie, Harris and Thiele, 2000). Smulders (1998) suggests that female responsibilities and images are incompatible with the masculine nature of the university, an environment where overwork and workoholism are made to be the norm. Acker and Feuerverger (1996) found that women particularly disliked the competitiveness and rigidity around academic promotion procedures. In a similar vein, Harris and Thiele's research in Australia (1998) points to the tension women experience in coping with the gendered nature of

the image of a successful academic as someone who has the capacity to work long hours so as to win grant money and produce publications. They highlight the masculine language of the academy –‘monastic life’, ‘reasonable man’, ‘scientific rationality’, ‘quantifiable output’, and identify the high degree of self-promotion required for success in academia as a problem for women.

Blackmore and Sachs (2000) looking at women in leadership positions in universities in Australia found the feminists among them to be positioned in contradictory ways. On one hand they valued their professional identity given them by the academy, but they were also acutely aware that the academy was still the site of male privilege and domination. In many ways the increase in managerialism in universities has increased this climate of male privilege (Mama, 2003) and much of the new language of efficiency, accountability and output is overtly masculine. Issues of sexual power also form an inevitable part of the patriarchal climate of higher education (Nicholson, 1996).

3.5 The Gendered Impact of Changes in Higher Education

The changes in higher education over the past twenty years have had numerous anticipated and unexpected impacts on universities as workplaces. Whilst affecting both men and women working in this sector, many of these impacts also have gendered implications as pointed out by authors such as Blackmore and Sachs (2001), Zeleza (2002; 2006), Mama (2003), and Sader, Odendaal and Searle (2005).

The overall shift in the purpose of higher education away from a moral basis emphasizing social justice, equity, and upliftment to meeting the needs of socio-economic development brings with it the potential of a capitalistic disregard for anything that does not deliver ‘the goods’. Redress and equity, including gender equity, can become subservient to efficiency and productivity. Leadership is challenged to effect social and cultural transformation which are very difficult to measure at the same time as achieving set, measurable quality, efficiency and fiscal targets. As a consequence of this, the complex cultural issue of equity often degenerates into counting and reporting on numbers of people (van Wyk, 2005).

Another component of the pressure to meet national economic development needs is the growing emphasis being placed in higher education institutions on science, technology and commerce. The humanities and social sciences, areas in which the majority of women academics work, are devalued in relation to the 'hard' subjects, those that will produce the professional workers and new technical knowledge the country needs. The knowledge that counts in the new knowledge economy is the positivist knowledge of rational men. The Humanities and Arts, including areas such as gender studies, are not seen as contributing towards 'real' knowledge and become marginalized, marginalizing the careers and epistemologies of many women academics at the same time.

At the institutional level the corporatization of higher education has brought the competitive masculine world of business into the collegial environment. Focus has shifted from away from the generation of new knowledge and the development of young critical thinkers to through-put rates and the 'bottom line'. Power is centralized in a core of highly paid executives whilst responsibility and blame are devolved to middle managers (often reluctant academics) with increasing fiscal accountability. Lafferty and Flemming (2000), writing about the changes in HE in Australia, see the periodic re-structuring imposed by the central core as one of a number of key strategies to maintain control. Other strategies include unmanageable workloads, and the confinement of knowledge and substantive decision making to the centre.

University employees are now less like a community of scholars and more like corporate employees. Unions represent employees. Line management requires regular performance appraisals against set targets, and individuals are rewarded accordingly. Individual performance assessments can be skewed by gendered power relations. More often than not, the line manager is a male. Performance assessment also tends to be carried out most assiduously on more junior staff (of which the majority are women) with senior staff relaxing into the collegiality of the 'old boys club'.

In the corporate university the student is seen as the 'client', and service is the name of the game. Competition requires that students, especially first-years, are nurtured. Being seen as natural nurturers, this role falls to women academic and support staff. Women are perceived as service providers, not as business executives, accordingly the core of central management of universities becomes even more strongly a masculine domain. Thus corporatization strengthens the existing university division whereby the senior management consists of men, and women are concentrated in jobs dealing with students (the client).

The calls for accountability from higher education have introduced new power relations within higher education and between institutions and the state. Morley (2003) in her book on "*Quality and Power in Higher Education*" explores the implications of this for women, noting that the need for accountability has created much more work for academics and administrators alike. The additional data collection work for quality assessments is invariably done by women, but her research shows that it is usually the senior men who present it, thus reinforcing the perception of women in 'adjunct' roles. She points to the ambiguity that some women feel in that the opportunity to work on quality assurance gives them some institutional visibility, but yet takes time away from their core academic responsibilities. The state's requirements for accountability have also resulted in new jobs which, being mainly at the support and middle management level, have provided new opportunities for women.

Fiscal stringency also has gendered outcomes in higher education. In order to save money, jobs have been reduced. This has resulted in increased work loads and more people being employed on short-term contracts. Women are hard hit by both of these. Increased work loads have an especially devastating impact on women who are already carrying most of the family responsibilities. In higher education women already make up the majority of the contract employees, an exploited group with no security and no access to research funding. The reduction in positions has also slowed down any process to achieve gender equity as people who leave or retire are often not replaced. The effect of this is particularly stark in the academic sector, where, unlike in the support and administrative sectors, there are very few new positions being created.

Against the demand for immediate socio-economic accountability it has also become increasingly difficult to argue for funds for 'soft' programmes such as gender or women's studies. Zeleza (2002) describes how African universities have responded by designing more market driven programmes on topics such as 'Gender and Development' and 'Women and Development' in an attempt to counter the antipathy to the teaching of theoretical feminist studies. Funding for research in areas such as the humanities (the area where women academics are concentrated) is also requiring innovative re-packaging to make it seem 'relevant'.

Besides increasing the workloads of teaching staff the massification of higher education has also provided opportunities for women. Not only are more girls entering higher education but many older women are taking advantage of more flexible continuing education opportunities. Women who never had the opportunity of studying further after school, or whose studies were interrupted by their reproductive responsibilities are returning to continue their education, either as full time, part-time or distant education students.

In Africa feminists in the universities have worked with funding agencies and civil society to bring pressure to bear on male dominated institutions which has resulted in a demand for greater accountability for gender equity in their student intake and staff profiles. Led by feminist academics such as Joy Kwesiga and Fenella Mukangara universities such as Makerere and Dar es Salaam have established innovative programmes to bring in more women students and increase gender awareness. Programmes such as these have been successful in increasing the proportion of women students, and in countering cultural perceptions (Mama, 2003; Morley et al, 2006).

Blackmore and Sachs (2000) highlight how changes in higher education have impacted the identity of women. Their research in Australia showed that women who become part of the management elite find themselves in very contradictory positions. They are often brought in as change agents for their more transformative leadership style, but are placed in hostile hierarchical, masculine corporate structures. Pressures of globalization are demanding women to work harder, and give more of

their time to the institution, usually with fewer resources. They have to perform as teachers (to increasing numbers of students), researchers, administrators, and show social responsibility. In addition the constant change and restructuring absorb time and energy, but at the same time create a feeling of powerlessness. The women give more of themselves, yet feel less valued by the corporate culture. Some of the women interviewed spoke of anger at the underlying logic and way restructuring had been communicated and implemented. However they felt powerless to attack the managerial logic. ICT innovations also exerted pressures and caused feelings of powerlessness. Not only need women be computer literate, but there were also expectations that they would incorporate the newest technologies into their teaching.

In Blackmore's book on *Troubling Women: Feminism, leadership and educational change* (1999) she points out how times of stringency and restructuring create opportunities for gender equity backlash. Latent male biases can be surfaced as part of the restructuring discourse, particularly as the discourse becomes more corporate and managerial. Limited resources can provide excuses for pushing the equity agenda onto the back burner. Funding for the feminist agenda - achieving equal pay, establishing child care centres, reproductive rights – competes with (male) jobs, much-needed new equipment, reduced running costs.

Changes in the workplace from collegiality to competition, the need to be constantly evaluating one's self and colleagues, the need to be responsive to new priorities, many of which differ from the reasons one entered education, and the extreme work loads can cause a crisis in values. Blackmore and Sachs (2000, p. 15) suggest that: *"Workloads are ever increasing, the demands for performance are taking us away from what we came into universities for, scholarship, and, for many, the personal costs are very great.... [W]e should ask ourselves is this how we really want to live our lives?"*

3.6 Higher Education in South Africa

Although sharing a colonial past with other countries in Africa, South Africa's apartheid history separated it from the rest of the continent and many of the

pressures higher education was experiencing globally. During the apartheid years the Nationalist government assumed extreme central control and instigated policies that alienated and isolated South Africa. Against the internal mass resistance and external pressures of globalization this isolation became increasingly unstable, and by the late 1980's discussions around power-sharing commenced the inevitable breakdown of isolationist policies.

A brief look at the history of higher education in South Africa provides a context for understanding the uniquely South African forces for transformation that are superimposed on the wider forces of globalization. South African higher education institutions divide into a number of groupings with different histories which lead to different interpretations of the transformation that is currently being demanded of them. These differences date back to the colonial, pre-Union times and were exacerbated during the apartheid era.

The historically-white universities had their origins in the mid-1800s when a Board of Examiners of Candidates for Government Service was set up in the Cape Colony (Cooper and Subotzky, 2001). Its purpose was to select candidates for the British home and civil service and it was modeled on the University of London which was then purely an examining body. At that time there was some debate about developing the South African College which had been founded in 1829 into a university, but it was felt that there were too few students as most young men went to Europe for their higher education. Accordingly the University of the Cape of Good Hope was established as an examining and degree awarding body for the early teaching Colleges: the South African College which would later become the University of Cape Town, Victoria College of Stellenbosch later to become Stellenbosch University, Rhodes University College (later Rhodes University) and Natal University College (later Natal University). After the Boer War, some of the nascent Afrikaans university colleges also came within the ambit of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. All of these colleges were almost exclusively white male, with respect to both staff and students.

The establishment of Union in 1910 awakened discussions around the development of universities in South Africa and a number of plans were drawn up which foundered

during the disruption of the First World War. However in 1916 Parliament passed the University Act which created the Universities of Cape Town and Stellenbosch, and the University of South Africa (UNISA). The University of the Witwatersrand was established in 1922 and the Transvaal University College became the University of Pretoria. In 1946 UNISA restructured to become a distance learning university. After the Second World War the other university colleges obtained full university status. Clear separation arose between Afrikaans and English speaking universities as Afrikaner nationalism grew.

As Cooper and Subotzky (2001) point out, the segregation of South African universities preceded the National Party coming to power in 1948. Whilst black people and women were allowed to write the examinations of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, the first women's college was the Huguenot College founded in the early 1900s and the first black college was the South African Native College, (later to become Fort Hare University) founded in 1915. This initial colonial approach to higher education was consolidated with the coming to power of the National Party, and, as with every other aspect of South African life, higher education became a reflection of apartheid policies. The Extension of Universities Act in 1959 prohibited white universities from accepting black students and laid the legislative framework for the establishment of 'tribal colleges'. These colleges were sited in the rural areas for specific African language groups, and later evolved into universities in the different apartheid 'homelands'. Specific universities were also created for different racial groups. In 1960 the University of the Western Cape was established for the coloured people of the Western Cape and the University College, later to become the University of Durban Westville, was set up for people of Indian descent. In response to the growing population of urban black people, the apartheid government opened the Medical University of South Africa (Medunsa) in 1976 and Vista University in 1982.

South Africa's 15 technikons have a similar apartheid-driven history. They were established as Colleges of Advanced Technical Education in the late 1960's in response to the needs of industry. By the end of the 1980s South Africa had a public higher education sector comprising 21 universities and 15 technikons providing education to some 350 000 students: 43% of them women, 42% of them black

(Cooper and Subotzky, 2001). Ten of the universities and seven of the technikons had been established for other than white students.

This government-imposed segregation of higher education did not proceed without opposition. The international academic boycott instituted in the 1980s was affecting researchers. South African academics became increasingly conscious of the impact of their isolation, especially from African academics. A number of the liberal white, English-speaking universities spoke out strongly against the racial segregation of students. Vigils and protests led to arrests of students and staff. All of the black campuses experienced protests and periods of closure. Opposing apartheid became a unifying factor among black and liberal staff and students and many student activists went on to become leaders in the struggle against apartheid.

Gibbon and Kabaki (2002, p. 189) note:

Staff enjoyed remarkable job security and, within each sector fairly similar conditions of service and salary packages. There was little pressure to recruit students or raise research funds and consultancy money, and minimal competition amongst faculties and between institutions.

3.7 Policies of a New Government

During the early 1990s changes in South Africa released powerful pressures for transforming all aspects of the apartheid society. There was need for individual redress and opening opportunities for all, for institutional transformation and for re-enforcing all of this with a strong Constitution and Bill of Rights. The new African National Congress (ANC) government had a greater proportion of women in Parliament and as Ministers than any previous government, and new policies reflect sensitivity to gender. Equity policies encompass race, gender, sexuality and disability. Cloete and Maassen (2002) highlight the importance of the symbolic nature of the early policy statements from the new regime. Emphasis was on breaking with the past rather than constructing a strategic future framework for action. Just as the ANC's 1994 idealistic Reconstruction and Development Policy focused on equity and redress, so too did the first policy statements from the Department of Education, such as the 1996 National Commission on Higher

Education Report (National Commission on Higher Education, 1996). Global pressures for accountability and efficiency were eclipsed by the symbolic importance of emphasizing equity and democracy.

This spirit of redress is captured in the 1997 *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for Higher Education Transformation* (Department of Education, 1997). The White Paper, in addressing the needs and challenges facing Higher Education in South Africa, pointed to the inequitable distribution of access and opportunities for students and staff along lines of race, gender, class and geography.

This includes gross discrepancies in participation rates from students from different population groups, indefensible imbalances in ratios of black and female staff compared to whites and males and equally untenable disparities between historically black and white institutions in terms of facilities and capacities. (para.1.4.1).

The White Paper envisions a transformed, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist system of higher education (para.1.14). It further identifies fundamental principles that should guide the process of transformation in higher education. The principles of equity and redress (para.1.18), democratization (1.19) and development (1.20), whilst not explicitly referring to gender equity, nonetheless underpin the intent of the Ministry in this regard.

Specific reference is made to the replacement of the previously fragmented HE structure with a single, coordinated system, with the purpose of broadening the social base of higher education with reference to race, gender, class and age. Such a system was to become increasingly representative of the racial and gender composition of the South African population. The implementation and accountability for the restructuring would rest with the development of an overall national and institutional three-year rolling plan. Such plans facilitate the setting of objectives and implementation targets that can be adjusted, updated and revised annually (para. 2.9). Institutional plans are expected to include *inter alia* race and gender equity goals and proposed measures to develop new programmes and human resource development plans. Cloete and Maassen highlight the vagueness of the White Paper saying that it was a document that achieved consensus “*by providing all things to all people*” (2002, p. 454).

The White Paper was followed by the Higher Education Act 101/1997 (South Africa, 1997). This Act, replacing all previous legislation pertaining to higher education, establishes and regulates a single coordinated higher education system in South Africa. In the Preamble the Act promotes the redress of past discrimination, ensuring representivity and equal access and promotes the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom. Furthermore, it is intended to pursue excellence, promoting the full realization of the potential of every student and employee, tolerant of ideas and appreciative of diversity. Section 31 of the Act addresses the need for democratic participation in co-operative governance by requiring the establishment of an institutional forum at each institution. The institutional forum is charged with advising the university council on issues affecting the institution, including race and gender equity policies.

Whilst the student demographics of higher education had begun to change prior to the formal advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, there was little substantial transformation of the system during the first six years of democracy. Gibbon and Kabaki (2002) explore the different ways in which the three main historical groupings of universities⁴ reacted to the idealistic policies of the nineties. English-language, white, liberal institutions essentially changed little. They participated actively in policy formulation, opened their doors to students of all races, made efforts to de-racialize senior leadership, and used their academic reputations and contacts with donors and industry to increase their non-government income. White Afrikaans-speaking institutions, as mentioned above, actively recruited black students and increased student numbers to increase government funding. Gibbon and Kabaki (2002, p. 467) describe these institutions as

...undoubtedly the most responsive to the transformation initiatives of the new government. These universities 'manipulated' most successfully the strengths, and weaknesses, of the new government policy and its interaction with the market.

The historically-black universities, disadvantaged by their rural positions, inexperienced management and academic weakness, sank even further into ineffectual despondency. Student numbers decreased, campuses were torn by strife,

⁴ White English-language universities, white Afrikaans-language universities, historically black universities.

resources shrank, and academics were 'poached' by white institutions striving to transform their staff profiles. All this against the unrealistically high expectations generated by the symbolic policies of redress.

With the *National Plan for Higher Education* (NPHE) published in February 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2001), the Education Ministry attempts to get to grips with *the framework and mechanisms for the restructuring of the higher education system to achieve the vision and goals for the transformation of the higher education system outlined in Education White Paper 3* (p. 1).

The NPHE establishes targets and goals and suggests mechanisms for achieving them. It addresses student access and through-put, staff and student equity, programme content, and the need for diversity in the system whilst reducing the number of institutions through mergers. More than previous policies, the NPHE emphasizes accountability, delivery, rationalization of resources and the need to produce graduates to meet the economic needs of the country. The NPHE pushed for change in the South African higher education sector with ministerially decreed mergers absorbing considerable amounts of energy in the early 2000s. Of special interest to this research are institutions such as the University of Cape Town which have not been required to merge and which therefore have to carry the responsibility for achieving their own transformation from a very comfortable position.

3.8 Gender in South African Higher Education

Against this turbulent background issues of gender have the potential to be ignored. However, in coming to power in 1994, the ANC government brought many strong women into Parliament and government departments. During the struggle these women had served alongside their men as equals, and now they demanded their share in the new freedoms that democracy would bring. Women comprise about 30% of the national representatives in Parliament and about 40% of the Ministers and Deputy Ministers are women. Accordingly a range of important policies include statements about gender equality. The Bill of Rights, as enshrined in the South African Constitution (South Africa, 1996), refers to gender equity in Section 9, the

Equality Clause. Specific references include that all people shall be equal before the law (9(2)); and that neither the State (Section 9(3)) nor any individual (Section 9(4)) may discriminate on the grounds of *inter alia*, gender and sex (9(3)); and that any discrimination on these grounds will be deemed unfair. (9(5)). *The Employment Equity Act 55/1998* recognizes the inherited discriminatory practices in employment. Key motivations for the Act are to promote the right of equality as it applies in the workplace; to eliminate unfair discrimination in employment; to redress employment inequity and to achieve a diverse workforce that is broadly representative of people. The Act makes explicit mention of the meaning of 'designated groups' to include women. In Sections 5 and 6 of the Act employers are expressly instructed to take steps to promote equal opportunity in the workplace by eliminating unfair discrimination in any employment policy or practice. Unfair discrimination includes discrimination on the grounds of gender and sex.

A number of government bodies were established to monitor gender equity and promote women's rights. The Commission for Gender Equity is a statutory body set up to advance women's rights in South Africa and to monitor all sections of society to ensure that they are promoting gender equity. Parliament also has a Joint Monitoring Committee on the Improvement of Quality of Life and Status of Women. Specifically addressing education, in 1996 the Minister of Education appointed a Gender Equity Task Team to advise on the establishment of a Gender Equity Unit in the Department. This Unit advises the Minister on all aspects of Gender Equity and has as priorities the formulation of a national Gender Equity Policy Statement and Platform for Action in education, facilitating mainstreaming of gender in all educational functions, desegregation of gender data in the Department's management information system and setting up programmes to eradicate gender based violence and sexual harassment in the education system (Department of Education Web, n.d.). Section 31 of *The Higher Education Act* (South Africa, 1997) provides for the establishment of an institutional forum at each institution that must advise the university council on issues affecting the institution including, *inter alia*, race and gender equity policies. *The National Plan for Higher Education* seeks to provide guidance around the implementation of policy in the Higher Education sector in South Africa. Section 3 of the NPHE focuses on achieving equity in the South

African Higher Education system. One of the two priorities in Section 3 specifically mentions staff equity at senior levels. The priority is articulated as follows:

To increase the representation of blacks and women in academic and administrative positions, especially at senior levels.. (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 35)

South Africa exhibits the well-documented pyramid effect with respect to gender participation in HE. Student numbers show more women than men participating in HE, but this proportion decreases with increasing level of degree. In 2004 there were some 573 000 students in Higher Education in South Africa (about 1,2% of the total population), 67% of them were women (Statistics from Department of Education Web site, Department of Education, 2004). Once in higher education women students also still tend to cluster in certain fields such as health sciences and the humanities and access remains a complex issue that is impacted upon by a number of factors, including social class, poverty, race and preparedness for higher education.

Women make up half the total workforce in HE, with statistics from the Department of Education indicating that 50.3% of the people with permanent appointments in higher education in 2005 were women. However, this statistic masks the increasing male dominance with increasing rank, both in the academic and administrative sector. Only 18,5% of the full professors, 15,7% of the Directors, and 2 of the 23 Vice Chancellors in South Africa were women in 2005. This is also evident in the University of Cape Town, my case institution, where in 2005 12,7% of the professors were women although women comprised 50,2% of the lecturers and junior lecturers. A similar pattern is evident with respect to race. Whilst 56,6% of the higher education workforce is black⁵, white people still make up 62% of the permanent senior and professional staff in the sector. (All statistics provided by Department of Education, personal communication 27 September 2006. More recent unpublished statistics are presented in Appendix 8.)

Gibbon and Kabaki (2002) point out that, as a group, women have fared better than black people in terms of achieving equity. This is especially true for white women

⁵ Here black is used to include all the equity categories 'Coloured', 'Indian', 'African' and 'Other' identified by the Department of Education.

and historically-white English-speaking universities have the highest proportion of women in the executive/support professional categories. As in other parts of the world (e. g. Essed, 1996), there can be no doubt that there is significant pressure on the few black women who have succeeded in entering the senior leadership ranks of the academy. Ramphele's biography (1995) provides an interesting insight into these stresses in the South African situation as she describes her experiences of joining academia and moving into its most senior position. Gibbon and Kabaki (2002) further query whether a contributing factor towards the increase in women in these management positions might not be the fact that men are leaving higher education for more lucrative jobs in government and industry.

The shift, noted above, from a discourse of redress and democracy to one of confronting the increasing impacts of globalization on South Africa has affected women in the South African higher education sector. The tensions between social inclusion and managerial efficiency are especially acute in South Africa and South African women have also been subjected to the same pressures as those discussed in the section above on 'The Gendered Impact of Changes in Higher Education'. Redress and equity compete with demands for accountability and productivity. It is hard to appoint more women when financial stringency is resulting in staff numbers being reduced. The areas in which most women work (humanities and social sciences) also tend to be hardest hit by staff cuts as the government pushes for increased emphasis on science, technology and commerce to meet national economic demands. As in other countries the new managerialism has brought the corporate masculine world into the academy, and increasingly decisions are taken by a small, male-dominated executive and not the academics. Here the masculine language of competitiveness, efficiency, and control concentrate power in a few hierarchically positioned men, despite the rhetoric of inclusivity and democracy. As in other parts of the world, South African women are also differentially impacted by the increased workloads due to increasing numbers of under-prepared students, the growing requirements for accountability to government and the need to service students as 'clients'. These increased professional workloads are superimposed on Africa's patriarchal society in which the gendered identity of women sees them still performing most of the unpaid domestic work.

3.9 Transformation in the South African Higher Education context

In this Chapter I have looked at the impacts of globalization on higher education. These impacts have been felt in both the developed world and in developing countries such as those in Africa. South Africa, with its complex intersection of developed and developing economies and infrastructures, was exposed to the same globalization pressures in the early 1990s with the advent of democracy. A further expectation from South Africa was that it was a country that was being 'transformed'. All aspects of the apartheid society were to undergo 'transformation', including education and higher education. However, exactly what transformation means, beyond the rhetoric, is unclear. In this section I shall explore some of the debates around what transformation means and how it is being applied to the South Africa higher education environment.

As quoted previously, Rao and Stuart (1997, p. 10, 11) talk about organizational transformation in terms of moving organizations

...in a direction that can accommodate, cherish, and foster the creativity and the productivity of women, men, young, old, people of colour, people of differing ability. We want organizations to incorporate goals and values that are life-affirming, human-centred, and justice-oriented.

Mohamed Salih quoted in the report on *Envisioning the African University of the Future* (Mama and Hamilton, 2003, p. 61) dreams of the decolonization of the African university.

The fact that the African university has so far failed to decolonize the imaginative capacities of students and staff alike is testimony to the pressing need for the decolonization of the African university as a prerequisite for the decolonization of the imagination and mind.

Jansen (2004) highlights the importance of changing what he calls 'institutional culture' as an essential component of achieving transformation. He points to things like portraits and paintings hanging on walls, emblems, who gets honoured and in what way, who dominates committees and who remain marginalized, who gets called Dr or just by their first name. He sees all of these as needing to change to

achieve the social integration that is essential for transformation. Fletcher (1998, p. 181) says:

Transformation ... will require far more than an exhortation to change organizational culture or re-engineer the work process. Rather, it will require an acknowledgement of and an engagement with the complex, gendered forces underlying current organizational norms

Specifically in the South African context, the *Education White Paper 3*, “A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education” highlights the challenge to “redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities” (Department of Education, 1997, section 1.1). However, following on from the White Paper, the *National Plan for Higher Education* (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 5) states: “These challenges have to be understood in the context of the impact on higher education systems world-wide of the changes associated with the phenomenon of globalisation.” Subsequent developments in South African higher education have seen the market-related forces of globalization pushing the needs for redress and social justice into the background, as described in the section above on ‘The policies of a new Government’.

I would like to distinguish between the effects of globalization on higher education and the process of transformation. Globalization is bringing external market forces to bear on higher education, resulting in the impacts outlined earlier in this chapter. These forces are beyond the control of the individual state, or institution. They are economically rather than idealistically driven. Transformation on the other hand is driven by social responsiveness. Accordingly it reflects the needs of particular groups in society. In South Africa this is especially complex as there are so many different, distinct societies, cultures and backgrounds resulting from our apartheid past. Transformation of higher education to a poor black labourer might mean facilitating access to university for his son. Transformation to a savant such as Mohamed Salih might mean “the decolonization of the imagination and mind.” To a woman working in higher education it might mean improved gender equity and greater opportunity for professional recognition and advancement. To a white male, transformation might conjure up affirmative action, job loss and economic and professional disempowerment. Transformation remains undefined but continues to

be the rhetoric of higher education institutions as evidenced by mission statements and marketing. It is eagerly sought by some and secretly feared by others.

The confusion between the changes in higher education brought about by globalization and those required by social transformation is enhanced by the entrenched patriarchal nature of the higher educational environment.

Managerialism, accountability, fiscal discipline and competition are strongly masculine traits. The leadership of HE in South Africa is 90% men, the majority of whom will relate to these corporate values. Hence it has been relatively easy, especially in the historically-white institutions, to bring about the changes required by globalization in the name of 'transformation'. Even the 'transformation' of the colour of the student body has had a financial driver. (True transformation of the student body would be addressing issues of class and poverty, which it is not.) Those with the potential to be most threatened by social transformation are white men. This is the group (in historically-white institutions) who have been most successful in diverting attention away from social transformation to achieving fiscal and managerial change, thus strengthening their positions.

Singh (2001, p. 17) asks:

Is the hegemony of the market paradigm inevitable or can a more complex notion of higher education transformation be meaningfully and realistically asserted, especially within African higher education where political and financial crises as well as a disabling global balance of forces pose almost intractable problems.

Singh argues that in a country like South Africa, undergoing democratic reconstruction, higher education has an important social role to play. She sees the economic responsiveness required of the system as but one part of this broader function. Other aspects of importance are the facilitation of social mobility by broadening access to education; the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, knowledge that will not necessarily have immediate economic impact but will expand human understanding; and the role of higher education as a '*critic and conscience of society*' (p. 12). These functions are especially important as the country grapples with issues of poverty, redress, and the re-design of governance structures. Sadly Singh concludes her paper (Singh 2001, p. 20) by saying:

Making social justice issues explicit and real within the notions of higher education responsiveness and accountability is likely to prove enormously difficult if not impossible. The task requires not only tenacious commitment but also clarity of conception about what is required and mobilization of different role-players around it.

The discourse around transformation in HE in South Africa takes place at two levels: that of the system as a whole and that of individual institutions. Apartheid clearly left a fragmented higher education system comprised of institutions with varying levels of resources, academic capital, and management skills. The policies put in place by the new government to address these discrepancies have been outlined above. As pointed out, these policies have had a number of unexpected consequences and did not achieve the transformation required of the system. Consequently the Minister took a more interventionist stand and decreed that specific mergers will take place. Through these mergers the Department of Education was hoping to achieve many aspects of transformation. These include: increased participation particularly in selected fields such as technology and commerce, changes in programme mix, staff and student equity, and improved fiscal, managerial and student through-put efficiencies. A new state funding formula based on compliance with equity and efficiency targets is the tool used to redirect the system. These measures are attempting to re-design the system to meet both global standards and expectations and the socio-economic developmental needs of the country. While there is broad recognition of the need to transform the system, the mergers decreed by the Ministry have met resistance from the sector and there is considerable doubt as to whether forced mergers will achieve the planned outcome⁶. A number of authors have called for a more nuanced approach, with different interventions for different institutions (Moja and Cloete, 2002; Cloete and Maassen, 2002). Other authors such as Badat (2001), Singh (2001) and Waghid (2001) call for an approach which incorporates to a greater extent the 'public good' function of higher education. There is a fear that, whereas HE in South Africa was shaped by race and ethnicity in the past, in the future it will be shaped by market forces and globalization. There also a danger of translating transformation into statistics and indicators of achievement and van Wyk

⁶ It is interesting to note that in the preface to the 2005-2006 Annual Report of the Council on Higher Education, Saleem Badat highlights the need to assess whether the mergers will indeed result in a more cost effective, equitable higher education environment.

(2005, p. 17) warns that “*excessive performativity may lead to sham or thin educational transformation.*”

At the individual institutional level many of the impacts of globalization outlined above are felt as ‘transformation’. Staff are required to do more work with fewer resources; to handle more, and more diverse, students (clients); to increase throughput and research productivity; and undertake more entrepreneurial activities. Professor Ndebele (the current UCT Vice Chancellor), when he was Chair of the South African Vice Chancellors’ Association has noted how institutions undergoing forced mergers are having considerable energy absorbed by the negotiations surrounding their mergers (Ndebele, pers. comm. 2003). This left fewer resources to address the other issues of transformation such as academic programmes, improved teaching and through-put rates, institutional climate and gender equity.

The challenges of globalization have impacted on institutions and staff at all levels. One effect of the increased managerialism in HE institutions is the fracturing of ‘collegiality’. Academic and support staff are no longer colleagues but employees, looked after by ‘human resources managers’. Competition is encouraged by performance management linked to salary rewards. Staff are unionized, and most institutions have lost staff through ‘right sizing’ and outsourcing ‘non-core business’. Much of this change has led to mistrust and a growing division between management and academics and support staff. Unfortunately these changes can be confused by many with transformation.

Cloete (2002) identifies equity, democracy, efficiency and responsiveness to societal interests and needs as the four main components of transformation of the higher education system. Transformation in South African higher education has largely been a top-down process with pressures coming on institutions from both globalization and the need to move away from the apartheid system of education. In many respects these different pressures form a tension, a tension between democracy and efficiency, between equity and excellence, between the old collegial way of doing things and the new managerial approach. These tensions between the different transformation pressures on HE can be seen in gendered terms. The global pressure towards managerialism emphasizes masculine characteristics of the

organization. Executive deans and directors, budgets, strategic plans, cost centres, accountability bring classic masculine strengths to the fore. Achieving racial and gender equity, and responsiveness to societal interests is better served by the more interactive leadership style that Rosener (1990) attributes to women. The paucity of women in leadership positions in SA higher education could be a factor contributing towards the lack of progress towards these 'softer' goals of transformation.

In South Africa the complexity of social transformation is compounded by the interplay between race and gender. Studies such as that of Human (1996) on managing workforce diversity expose the racism in the South African work place and point to how “(c)enturies of oppression have led to the ‘inferiorization of blacks’” (p. 54). Walker (1998) explores how deeply race and gender interact in the academic environment, affecting both men and women, black and white. Potgieter (2000) in her study *Black Academics on the Move* noted that black women especially in South Africa’s historically-white universities (like my case institution) experience racism and sexism as intrinsically linked. Mabokela and Magubane (2004) write that black women in the academy are strongly conscious of their specific identity. They also point to the additional disempowerment that comes from the negative racial stereotyping around black intellectual endeavour. Because of their different histories black women and white women are differentially positioned with respect to transformation. Steyn (2001, p. 20) points out how white women have been able to “enjoy ‘secondhand feelings of superiority’” and participate in processes of racial dominance that parallel gender dominance. Whilst this intersection of race and gender are germane to the transformation of higher education in South Africa there appears to have been a *de facto* ‘prioritization’ of race during the first decade of democracy (see Chapters 5).

As discussed, the transformation debate in South African higher education started with the call for redress, equity and democratization. The forces of globalization were super-imposed on these worthy ideals. During the first ten years of South Africa’s new democracy, market forces have pushed issues of equity and social justice to the side. Recently the energy of most of the sector has been focused on the forced mergers. However those few institutions that remain untouched by the

mergers face the real challenge of transformation. The University of Cape Town, which is the case institution for my study, is one of these universities.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has focused on the recent changes that have been brought to bear on higher education across the world and in South Africa in particular. Globalization has impacted institutions bringing a culture of efficiency, accountability and competition. A simultaneous massification of higher education has resulted in increasing pressures on staff. Developments in information and communication technology have brought opportunities for sharing knowledge and communication, and threats of intellectual colonization for developing countries. Globalization has had a particularly harsh impact on African higher education by reinforcing the divide between universities in the developing and developed world.

Universities in South Africa which in many ways bridge the developed/developing world divide have been isolated from the rest of the continent by the country's many years of apartheid. Their isolation has resulted in their being screened from many of the pressures of globalization until the early 1990's. Currently, as the country develops its new democracy, South African higher education is facing the dual pressures of globalization and the call for equity and redress, all under the umbrella of 'transformation'. How the sector is negotiating these tensions has been a subject of much research. In this study I am tracing one component of these negotiations, gender-based change. As background to this, I have highlighted the position of women in higher education and outlined some of the gendered impacts of globalization, noting how women have been differentially affected. I have also noted the tension between the masculine discourse and approach of globalization and the more consultative, feminine requirements for achieving the social aspects of transformation.

This brief summary of higher education in Africa and South Africa in particular and the pressures being exerted on the sector provides the context for my study of gender-based change as a component of transformation. Institutions such as my

case university which are not being required to transform through a forced merger, are challenged to explore how to become more socially responsive, how to transform themselves. As an historically-white liberal institution, beyond the pressures of globalization, the greatest pressure for social transformation in the University of Cape Town has been for racial transformation. Whilst this will be outlined in my discussion of the institution's annual Vice Chancellor's reports, the focus of my research is gender-based change. My thesis is that an in-depth analysis of the processes and power interactions involved in bringing about gender-based change will provide insight into the broader higher education social transformation agenda. I do not believe that transformation is something that is imposed from above, or, like globalization, from the capitalist North. It is a very personal process of broadening people's world-view so as to be able to move forward with new awareness. As noted before, higher education is a conservative, patriarchal environment. As Fletcher (1998) writes, any organization intent on transformation will need to engage existing patriarchal forces. She suggests that this will involve exposing

...the gendered nature of the structures, norms, and practices that reinforce the public-private dichotomy at every level of analysis – from the deeply interior processes that privilege one source of self-esteem and self identity (public sphere accomplishments) over others – to the group level, where structures, reward systems, and managerial practices support gendered, public-private split definitions of commitment, success, competence, and achievement – to the organizational level, where work and family are constructed as separate and distinct spheres of life... (p. 182).

This feminist approach to achieving transformation forms the basis for my research methodology which is discussed in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER 4

4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

4.1 Introduction

In Chapters 2 and 3 I outlined some of the research that has been conducted on organizations and organizational change, focusing in on higher education institutions as a particular genre of organization. I also reviewed some of the literature on gender in bureaucratic organizations and the positioning of women in order to provide background to the gendered culture that has been identified in universities in many different countries. This background portrays universities, institutions charged with the generation of new knowledge and ideas and the education of the young, as being hierarchical organizations dominated by patriarchal power structures. Superimposed on this are the pressures of globalization and, in South Africa in particular, the pressure to transform the sector in line with the new democratic order.

The overt transformation discourse in South Africa has focused on race, often in the past conceptualized in terms of structures and numbers. The emergence of current debates on transformation within UCT highlight the hollowness of the past approach:

...I believe that the one revolution that has yet to occur at UCT does not have much to do with structures, but more with how we relate to one another at UCT as people who have brought to UCT more than our intellects. We have also brought our personal histories, our social, political, racial, ethnic and national backgrounds that have shaped us in different ways.

(Letter from Vice Chancellor Ndebele to the UCT community, 2005a).

Accordingly, I believe that in order to gain insight into the complex processes of transformation within UCT we need to look in depth at individual change initiatives that have affected personal histories and social, political, racial and ethnic understandings.

'Transformation' is the outcome of multiple, interlinking components of organizational change. In other parts of the world a key focus of the transformation of higher education organizations has been the gendered nature of power relations. With South Africa's apartheid history gendered transformation has the potential to be eclipsed by race. However, despite this there have been change initiatives motivated by gender inequities that have challenged the gendered culture of the institution. These form the focus of my research. In this Chapter I outline the development of my theoretical concepts, discuss my methodology arguing why I believe that a feminist qualitative approach is best suited to this research, and outline my rationale for using both an analysis of documents of leadership discourse and an analysis of specific feminist initiatives embedded in the case university to better expose the hidden power relationships and politics inherent in change and transformation.

4.2 The development of theory

As mentioned in Chapter 1, my interest in gender and transformation in higher education developed out of personal experience and it is important at the start of this discussion on methodological approach to acknowledge the significance of my positionality with respect to my topic (Harding, 1987; Mbilinyi, 1992; Morley, 1996). The theoretical concepts on which this research is based have emerged from this context of my many years as a woman in higher education and my ongoing involvement as a staff member in the institution. In this section I describe how these concepts developed and have been refined through an iterative reflexive process over the past few years.

Moving into a senior position in the University at a time of national transformation I became increasingly interested in the role of women as leaders and their potential as leaders of transformation. Readings such as Subotzky (2001), Meyerson and Scully (1995) and Fletcher (1999) led me to theorize that in their own distinctive way, South African women in their higher education institutions were bringing about change by exploiting their insider/outsider positions, using relational practice, and by achieving 'small wins'. I believed that if I could highlight this process and gain a better

understanding of how women were effecting change in my institution, this would contribute towards understanding the intractable processes of transformation. The original topic I proposed for my research was: "*Women Leaders: The key to transforming a historically advantaged education institution?*" Key research questions were to address the institution's ability and political will to recognize and nurture women leaders; what contributed to their growth as leaders; and an assessment of the impact of women leaders on institutional transformation.

I theorized that if I used my knowledge of the institution to identify specific change initiatives that had been spearheaded by one or more women, I could analyze the processes that had taken place and the strategies used by the women. I could extrapolate from these findings to suggest strategies for bringing about broader institutional transformation. It was not difficult to identify initiatives in the University that had been spearheaded by women. I had personally initiated three⁷ and been the driver of a fourth, establishing the University's International Office. Women had taken initiatives in establishing many units with transformational potential. These included the Equal Opportunities Research Project, the HIV Aids Unit, the Educare Centre, the Emerging Researchers Programme, the Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Office, the African Gender Institute, the Academic Support Programme, and the Women's Legal Centre, and individual women were playing key roles in other areas of change such as student development, academic planning, the unionization of staff, human resources development, information technology, and communication and marketing.

I proposed to obtain my data by means of focused semi-structured interviews with a range of women I identified to be change agents. A pilot interview with a colleague from another institution whom I knew well to have been a change agent, showed that this approach would not be effective. She downplayed her role in bringing about change, had difficulty describing her achievements, and seemed unaware that what she had done was in any way a powerful challenge to the prevailing institutional

⁷ In the mid 1990s I started the organization, South African Women in Science and Engineering (SA WISE) and in the early 2000s I initiated the PASS Forum, an interactive forum which brought together professional and administrative staff for regular monthly briefings on important University issues. I also initiated HERS-SA, a professional development programme for women which will be discussed below.

culture. To explore this further, I asked her to use the same interview schedule and interview me. I felt that as I was aware that I was required to be analytical and 'boast' about my achievements, this would provide an optimum interview context to test the viability of the method. I found the interview to be very unsatisfactory, both after participating in it and while trying to analyze it. In a discussion focused on myself, I found extreme difficulty conveying the complexity of my multiple positions in relation to the institution and how I was able to negotiate change. It was clear that an approach which directly asked women what they had achieved would not yield useful data.

I started a process of re-thinking what data might be needed to better understand processes of transformation and the role of women in bringing about change. I felt that a better understanding of the context within which the changes had taken place would help to highlight actual achievements. I decided to attempt to get an understanding of the evolving institutional climate and what change and transformation meant to the University of Cape Town and to explore how these had developed in response to the changing socio-political environment. Each year since 1978 the University had published an annual Vice Chancellor's Report. I felt that the continuity of this and its purpose to communicate what the leadership felt was important about the institution, made it a powerful data source about the evolving climate. At the same time I started exploring concepts of transformation, ranging from the structural approach of Cloete et al (eds. 2002), to the all-embracing, feminist views of Rao and Stuart (1997).

The subject of my research became: "*Women as transformational change agents in South African Higher Education: a case study of their potential impact on the 'transformation' of an historically advantaged university in South Africa*". The theoretical concept which I was exploring remained unchanged: I wished to show that women, for a number of reasons that had been written up in literature on organizations, change and gender, were in a privileged position to bring about social change, and to explore how this might better be used in effecting transformation in South African higher education.

Experience with the pilot interviews led me to change my method of collecting data and in addition to the discourse analysis of the Vice Chancellor's reports, I decided to take a case study approach focusing on feminist initiatives embedded within my case study institution (see below). In selecting my initiatives I decided to look specifically at change initiatives by women that directly addressed gender-based change. By doing this I hoped to forefront gender perceptions as an integral component of institutional culture and more easily expose the negotiations around change by a focus on gender-motivated power interactions. I reasoned that the use of a gender lens focused on perceptions of gendered change has the potential to illuminate processes of social change in the complex university environment. Analysis of interviews with men and women around these initiatives would reveal attitudes to and perspectives about gender-based change and in this way provide insights relevant to the dynamics of bringing about transformation.

As analysis of the data progressed emergent themes focused on the intersection of the institutional culture with the impetus for gender-based change. The processes of negotiation around change became more significant than the gender of the change agent. The interviews were tracing out a distinctive institutional culture and revealing how the organization was responding to change, and a key question then became: what does this example of the institutional response to gender-based change say about the ability of the institution to transform? The final topic for my study became: **Negotiating institutional transformation: a case study of gender-based change in a South African University.**

In conducting this research I build on the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 around organizations, and organizational change and gender to theorize that:

1. The case University has a distinctive institutional culture and that gender is a powerful component of that culture
2. The culture of a university is related to its ability to undergo change and transformation
3. It is possible to expose the dynamics of gender based change
4. The dynamics of gender-based change are relevant to the dynamics of transformation in higher education.

My first proposition is supported by the literature on organizations and their institutional culture (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 highlighted the particular features of the culture in higher education institutions across the world and outlined some of the pressures on South African universities. Both chapters showed gender to be a factor in establishing power relationships which contribute to the institutional culture. This research provides a theoretical background against which my data can be used to explore the culture of the case university.

There is support for my second proposition in the work of researchers such as Kettle (1996), Ely and Meyerson (1998, 2000), and Kolb and Merrill-Sands (1999) who link change in the workplace to diversity and cultural assumptions. In addition, a number of authors (eg; Meyerson and Scully, 1995; Fletcher, 1998; Blackmore and Sachs, 2002; McLagan, 2002 and 2003) have drawn attention to the potential of women and other outsiders possessing particular skills as change agents. I suggest that their impact would be modulated by the institutional culture, and in particular by the institution's gender culture.

The dynamics of change have been studied by many researchers resulting in many theories of change (see Chapter 2). Bringing about change requires the exercise of power. In exposing the dynamics of gender-based change in the university, I build on the work of Morley and many other gender researchers around the world which has shown the strength of using qualitative techniques to explore the politics and micropolitics of gender in the academy. In further linking the dynamics of gender-based change to the broader transformation of the institution I will be following a direction suggested by Subotzky (2001) in his paper on "*Equity and Excellence*". I theorize that the response of the institution to gender-based change motivated for and led by women – surely a powerful combination - reflects its ability to respond to the imperative for other types of social change that will eventually lead to institutional transformation.

Following Wengraf's Pyramid Model of qualitative research design (Wengraf, 2001) my Research Purpose, which provides the context for the research, is **to explore gender-based change initiatives in the case university as a model of the broader transformation of South African higher education**. As mentioned

above, my thesis is that studies on gender transformation have the potential to provide insight into other aspects of transformation. Stated in terms of a Central Research Question, my research is asking: ***How are gender-based transformations effected in the higher education environment and what can this tell us about negotiating transformation in higher education institutions?***

I have identified three main Research Objectives in order to address this Question. The first of these Research Objectives serves to situate gender-based change in the context of the institutional culture. The second Research Objective looks at the dynamics of gender-based change in the university environment, and the third Objective explores the implications of the intersection of climate and dynamics for negotiating transformation.

Research Objectives

1. To map gender as a component of the University's institutional culture.
2. To explore the dynamics of gender-based change in the higher education environment
3. To assess the implications of institutional culture and change dynamics (as revealed around gender-based change) for negotiating institutional transformation.

These Research Objectives translate into the following Theory Questions which are used in the design of the data collection.

1. How is the case institution experienced?
2. What are the perceptions around gender in the case institution?
3. What are the dynamics of gender-based change in the higher education environment?
4. How are these impacted by the institutional culture?

4.3 Key concepts

My research weaves together a number of key concepts to shed light on institutional transformation, itself a complex and contested concept. I do not believe that it is useful to attempt to provide positivist definitions of these concepts, but I rather provide some thoughts around their complexity, as a motivation for the feminist qualitative approach I use in addressing my topic. It is important to recognize here that many people have explored these concepts in great depth and that I have not, and neither is it my intention to do so. These are concepts I use as tools to focus on a dynamic process, transformation in higher education in South Africa. In this section I capture some of my thoughts on the concepts of 'transformation' as it applies to the South African higher education environment, 'the university' as a specific large bureaucratic organization, 'institutional culture', and 'gender' as a component of that culture. The complexity and ambiguity of these concepts will need to be taken into account in designing my methodological approach.

What is transformation? Transformation requires a complex interaction of variables – class, race, gender, ethnicity, culture, epistemology, efficiency, social responsiveness, accountability – many of them unmeasurable. Interpretations of transformation are dependent on the perspective of the viewer, integrating both his/her personal and moral perspectives and the broader political and historic background from which s/he comes. Perceptions of transformation are also affected by the environment and are liable to change in response to a broad range of external inputs. Transformation of an institution is made up of multiple small and large, overt and covert interacting changes. Change is facilitated, driven or prevented and subverted by the power dynamics in the institution, the university.

What is the university? As discussed in Chapter 3 it can be described as a large bureaucratic organization ostensibly focused on acquiring and passing on new knowledge. But does a description of the purpose, structure and the demographics of the institution convey what it is? A university is also a community, reflecting the society within which it finds itself, and in South Africa, that community is itself fractured into sub-communities based on race, gender, class and level of education. In the university environment those sub-communities also splinter into discipline-

defined sub-communities and academically defined hierarchical groupings. Each of those sub-communities and the individuals within them have different perspectives of what the university is – the buildings in which they work, the leadership who issue visionary statements, the bureaucracy that demands cost-savings, the colleagues and students with whom one interacts every day. Beyond these material manifestations, the university is also described by its institutional culture.

The concept of institutional culture is also complex and difficult to define. As Gherardi (1995) points out the culture of an organization is not something that is overtly noticed by its people as it is just part of what is natural and normal. Institutional culture is expressed in both artifacts and non-material things such as beliefs and patterns of learned behaviour. Institutional culture is discernable in the very visible architecture of buildings and the invisible power structures that maintain a status quo. It is flaunted in the format of ceremonies and emerges in interpersonal interactions. Some believe that it results from the corporate philosophy and can be managed, others interpret that philosophy in different ways and know that their individual experiences cannot be designed or controlled. Institutional culture is the norm of experience lived by people in and working with the organization and while each person's experience is individual, the assumption is that there are common threads and themes that run through these experiences, enabling a broad description of aspects of the organization's culture. Without individuals being overtly aware of it institutional culture guides behaviour and beliefs and thus influences every aspect of the institution's functioning.

One of the key themes in an institution's culture comprises the assumptions and values that govern gender interactions. At this point it is important to clarify my use of the complex and evolving term 'gender'. In this research gender is not the subject of my study, but a tool I am using to expose change dynamics. Much has been written about gender but I find the strongest resonance with Gherardi's description of gender as "*a pervasive symbol of the power relation*" (1995, p.17). Meanings are assigned by society or organizations to the terms male and female. These meanings tend to subscribe to an oppositional duality, one is either male with all that implies, or female, in a way that minimizes the differences among women and among men. This simplification determines the form and structure of interactions, building on and

reinforcing deeply ingrained assumptions and expectations. In some senses the gender lens I use can be seen as coming from a women's standpoint perspective as I focus primarily on women and women's change initiatives, but I hope that in my analysis I am able to bring in a more dynamic approach which recognizes the differences among women and among men, across cultural and other boundaries.

4.4 Methodology - A qualitative feminist reflexive approach

...(F)eminism is neither a concept, nor a theory, nor even a systematic set of utterances about women. It is, rather the means chosen by certain women to situate themselves in reality so as to redesign their 'feminine' condition. (Braidotti, 1991, p. 147)

How does one study transformation? Because of its complexity there is a strong temptation to attempt to 'measure' transformation, to count numbers (of women, black people, through-put, courses) or to survey attitudes. As suggested by Mbilinyi (1992, p. 53) this neo-positivist approach tends to avoid "*the big question*". It is based in an epistemology that sees knowledge-gathering as an objective collection of 'facts' and knowledge as distinct from its context. Whilst a simplistic positivist approach collects 'facts' and statistics which can give a black-and-white snapshot of the status of an institution, I believe a feminist qualitative approach has the potential to add colour to the picture by integrating perspectives and contexts. Feminist epistemology integrates the knower with his or her social, hierarchical and cultural context as it explores the power relationships of socially constructed gendered behaviour. Increasingly feminist epistemology is also looking at the inter-relationships between gender and other social relationships such as race and class. It further has a political aim, looking both at what is happening and how things should be. Both of these are particularly significant in the transforming South African environment. Integrating feminist epistemology with a qualitative approach I am able to expose micropolitical interactions within their social context and present this as valid knowledge contributing toward the understanding of transformation.

Thus in this study I take a feminist qualitative approach using a gender lens to add shades of understanding to the transformation of a very specific case institution, the

University of Cape Town. Ideally this study would form one of a number of different qualitative studies, in different institutions, from different perspectives, to enable us to build up a colourful, three-dimensional, moving picture of the complex and evolving process of transformation in South African higher education.

As discussed previously, higher education institutions are by nature conservative and patriarchal. This patriarchy exerts a strong force for maintaining the *status quo*. In South Africa this means the cultural dominance of middle-class white males from a colonial background. As the work of Lipman-Blumen (1984), Morley (1995, 1996, 1999), Nicolson (1996) and others has shown, gender analysis is a powerful tool to expose the power dynamics of the institution. Whilst obviously affecting gender issues, these patriarchal power dynamics also influence a multitude of other facets of transformation. Thus an analysis of the dynamics of gender-based change in higher education in South Africa has the potential to provide insights relevant to achieving broader aspects of transformation of the system.

The elusive and complex nature of transformation and my other key concepts lends itself to using a feminist qualitative approach in an attempt to gain insight. Harding (1987) suggests three distinctive features of feminist research which are relevant to my study. Firstly, feminist research explores women's experiences and sees them as a valid topic of study. There is recognition that women's experiences differ and that even the same woman is multiply engaged in her different life contexts. In the South African university setting women are insiders and outsiders, black and white, academics and mothers and wives, powerless and powerful. All these multiple positionings are important in exploring social transformation. Secondly feminist research is political and can aim at bringing understanding and solutions to women's concerns. In looking at gender-based change as a component of transformation I have a clear political motive to raise the profile of gender, and more specifically women, in the discourse around transformation. Thirdly, a feminist approach allows me to locate myself in the research process. The topic of my research arises from my many years of experience in higher education and my growing awareness of the role of gender in this supposedly neutral environment. To quote Harding (1987, p. 9) "*...the beliefs and behaviors of the researcher are part of the empirical evidence for (or against) the claims advanced in the results of research.*" She claims that bringing

in this subjective element increases objectivity by exposing the standpoint of the researcher as information relevant to the research. This incorporation of the personal perspectives of the researcher into the study is particularly important to recognize and embrace in researching transformation, a concept deeply influenced by an individual's *Weltanschauung*. As Taylor (2001), Hartley (1994) Harding (1987) and others point out, the feminist approach recognizes the impossibility of separating the researcher from the research. The influence of the researcher on the selection of the research topic, on the data collection and analysis cannot and should not be ignored. In my research, rather than ignoring this, I consciously build on and integrate my knowledge of the case institution into the study. Beyond this I also recognize that I am not only integrating my influence as a researcher into the research, but also as an insider, I am able to provide personal cultural and institutional insight. Quoting Pillow (2003, p.182, 183) this is a technique that many researchers have used to bring richness to their topic and "*situate the understanding of their research out of similar personal experiences with the subjects.*"

Accordingly, as the researcher, it is important to highlight my familiarity with the universe being studied. Having obtained an undergraduate degree at the institution, I have been employed directly or peripherally within the case institution for over 35 years in a number of different positions. This has given me wide experience of the institution, and of being a woman in the higher education environment in South Africa. This experience includes being a researcher in the Science Faculty in the late 1960s when the University was essentially a white, apartheid-rooted institution; administering scientific programmes and coordinating scientific research across a number of disciplines; and later moving into a relatively senior management position in the administration in the mid-1990s, a time of change both in the country as a whole and in the University. Both science and senior management are strongly male-dominated. With increasing age and experience came an increasing awareness of the insidious prevalence of gender discrimination in the academic environment. In attempting to understand why this should be so, it became clear that a positivist approach to gender equality is unrewarding. As much research in this field has shown, numbers and rational explanations contribute little to understanding the causes of the inequities or bringing about change in the academy. Hence the reflexive, feminist, qualitative approach taken in this study.

I am thus a white woman whose 40 years' experience with the University has led me to believe that women are more significant players in the higher education environment than their official representation would suggest. My theoretical approach recognizes that women's voices and issues can be suppressed by the hegemonic patriarchy in the higher education environment but that it is possible to bring these into the debate through the process of feminist research. I bring to this research a particular positionality. As a white person in an historically-white institution I have been an 'insider'. As a white woman (not a man) in an historically-white university in the 'new' South Africa, I am now also an outsider and part of the 'designated groups'. Being a woman manager in a male dominated academic environment I am an 'outsider'. Many of the women in the institution share different aspects of these dualities with me, and many are outsiders in every sense, being black, woman and in the administration. Ann Oakley highlighted the significance of these different worlds for the construction of knowledge. In the forward to *Gender and the Restructured University* (2001, p. xiii) she wrote:

The marginalized live in more than one world; developing a capacity to understand multiple worlds is a condition of their survival. Intrinsic to this capacity is the art of making connections. And making connections is surely one critical definition of knowledge, whatever world we inhabit.

My location and experience influence my research and my epistemology. These encourage reflexivity with "*the researcher assessing and qualifying claims as they are made, rather than presenting them as statements of truth.*" (Taylor, 2001, p. 19) This reflexivity is an integral part of the design, data collection and analysis of this research. To quote Pillow (2003, p. 178):

Reflexivity ...is often understood as involving an ongoing self-awareness during the research process which aids in making visible the practice and construction of knowledge within research in order to produce more accurate analyses of our research.

Morley (1996, p. 139) cautions that reflexivity "*can also mean hesitancy, uncertainty and caution as a result of being acquainted with the theoretical complexities of the subject*", something I have experienced strongly as I developed my theoretical framework.

This knowledge of the environment also contributes toward the 'indwelling' identified by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) as an essential aspect of the qualitative research process. Whilst the insights and tacit knowledge that come from this familiarity of the culture are to be welcomed, they place upon the researcher a responsibility to avoid making assumptions based on familiarity. The contextualizing of the change initiatives within the transformational chronology presented in the Vice Chancellor's Reports assists with this. I use the Vice Chancellor's Reports to provide both qualitative data for feminist analysis and as a source of positivist statistics within a chronological framework. As Dunne (1996) pointed out qualitative and quantitative methods have been dichotomized but this need not serve to exclude numerical data from qualitative research. Examples include Walker's use of history and statistics to contextualize her interviews about women's experiences in the academy (Walker, 1997) and Goode and Bagilhole (1998) who combine documentary and case study data in looking at the management of change in a UK university.

4.5 Method

A central methodological question has been: "How do I expose the dynamics and impact of gender-based change in higher education?" Chapter 3 highlighted how, globally, higher education has a specific organizational culture. Clearly there are regional and cultural differences between institutions but in South Africa, irrespective of these, higher education is being called upon to transform, with gender equality being one aspect of this transformation. A number of studies have taken a positivist approach to look at the progress of this gender transformation across the sector (eg Zulu, 2003). These reveal minimal differences between institutions and relatively little change with time. This similarity suggests that analogous gender dynamics operate across the sector and that an intensive study of the dynamics in one institution could reveal insights of more general relevance to the South African higher education environment. Based on my feminist reflexive approach and a deep appreciation of the value of integrating personal location into the study, I have selected the University of Cape Town as the site of my study. Like Magubane (2004, p. 3) I hope that the outcomes of this research "*will generate insights that can usefully be*

deployed to understand other forms of oppression, both within and outside of the academy."

The case study approach has been described as a strategy where the emphasis is on "*understanding processes alongside their (organizational and other) contexts.*" (Hartley 1994, p. 210). Hartley specifically recommends the case study approach

...in studies of organizational behaviour, especially in understanding organizational innovation and change, as shaped by both internal forces and the external environment.

She goes on to say:

Case study analysis has allowed the tracking of change over time, as a response to both historical forces, contextual pressures and the dynamics of various stakeholder groups in proposing or opposing change. (p. 211).

Yin (1994) outlines how a single case study is useful in a situation where previously difficult phenomena are to be observed and described providing revelatory information. In terms of this I use an embedded design (Yin, 1994) with my main unit of analysis being the University of Cape Town. Within this I focus on two embedded gender-based change initiatives. Information from both these units of analysis (the University and the change initiatives) is generalized to make theoretical propositions about the culture of the institution and bringing about transformation in the University.

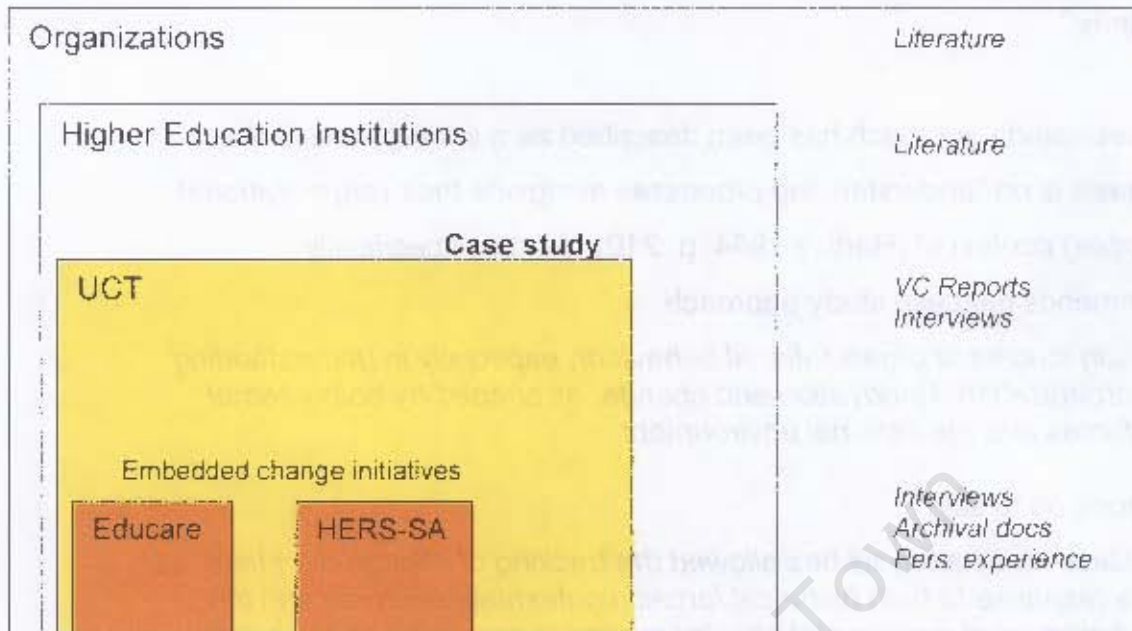


Table 1. Diagram showing the positioning of the case study and embedded initiatives within the universe of gender and change in organizations. The right-hand column indicates data sources used at each level.

The case study approach allows the researcher to use multiple sources of evidence and makes use of various triangulations to provide validity (Wengraf, 2001).

Triangulation is provided by the use of different sources of data (see below), by interviewing participants covering a range of perspectives around each subunit of analysis, and by integrating different types of information (eg chronological, statistical, subjective, symbolic, micropolitical) from the text analyses. This ability to combine many data sources and types is one of the advantages of using the case study approach.

My first Objective is to map the gender culture in the case institution. The culture of an institution is notoriously difficult to capture and describe. This difficulty is compounded if we attempt to trace the evolution and transformation of this culture. Potentially relevant data could include the charting of personal experiences, analysis of archived documentation and formal histories, and tracing policy development. All of these could contribute to understanding the facets of the institution's culture but, I believe, would fail to expose the unintentional expressions that are central

components of culture. These expressions of culture are to be found in the language used, in images, symbols and rituals, in the choice of what and who are celebrated and how, and what is taken seriously.

The variety of approaches offered by discourse analysis renders it a useful tool for addressing this complexity. Discourse analysis recognizes that what is written or spoken conveys much more than the content of the text. It sees language as a form of social practice and can be applied to text in its broadest sense to show meaning. Cresswell (1998) describes how meaning is found through seeing language (interpersonal communication) as constructive and functional. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis expands the examination of language and language use to consider the exercise of power through language and explores the relationships between the discourse and how people feel or think and what they do (Cresswell, 1998, p. 107). While text provides abstracted information, discourse analysis seeks to elucidate the contexts, interactions and power relations latent in the language and images used. With my focus on gender, "*the pervasive symbol of the power relation*" (Gherardi, 1995, p. 17), the ability of discourse analysis to expose subtle power interactions is especially valuable. Morley's research (1996, 1999, 2000, etc) has shown the power of using discourse analysis to interrogate the micropolitics of gender in the academy. Discourse analysis also enables the integration of contexts and subtle changes in these contexts to contribute to the data, and is thus particularly important in analyzing the evolving gendered climate of the case institution. Discourse analysis enables exploration of the complex key concepts which are central to my study and which challenge a more positivistic approach. Of particular relevance to my research Cresswell describes how discourse analysis can be applied to a wide range of materials beyond documents and transcripts, and how it can address the relationship between discourses and institutions. Also relevant is the fact that it can be used to trace how discourses have changed over time. Accordingly I use selected tools from the array of techniques that make up discourse analysis to work with my data.

In addressing my first Research Objective, mapping gender as a component of the institutional culture of the case institution, discourse analysis tools are applied to both main sources of data, the Vice Chancellor's Reports and the depth interviews.

The different analysis techniques applied to the Vice Chancellor's reports range from tracing the development of the concept of transformation to interpreting the meanings and contradictions in images and awards. Quantitative statistics are extracted around themes of relevance (eg numbers of women) and text is analyzed for both content (eg what is said compared with what is not said) and functionality (how is the language being used and to what purpose). Of particular interest is the way that the Reports use language to construct and re-construct meaning. With the change initiative data, particular attention is paid to exploring how the language used by participants and in documents represents contexts and positionalities.

My second Research Objective focuses on the dynamics of change and in addressing this I analyze the depth interviews and archival data to provide the three broad categories of information identified by Wengraf (2001): objective referents (facts), subjectivity, and discourse. Extracts of the interviews and documents about specific change initiatives are presented and analyzed, and some of the tools of discourse analysis are applied to gain deeper insight into political negotiations at the micro and macro level.

My third Research Objective is addressed by treating the study of gender-based change as a 'case study' of broader-based transformation. The findings from the first two objectives are juxtaposed to see if the insights about the institution's gendered culture and the negotiations around bringing about gender-based change can say anything about transformation in the case institution. In a final meta-analysis, this multi-level application of the case study approach is used to suggest insights of relevance to negotiating higher education transformation.

4.6 Sources of data

As mentioned above the case study approach allows for the use of multiple different kinds of data. The evolution of my theoretical approach led me to select four main sources of data. These are the annual Vice Chancellor's Reports issued by the case institution, transcripts of depth interviews with carefully selected (male and female) participants, relevant documentation, and my personal familiarity with the case which

has been discussed above. This triangulation, using multiple sources of data, provides added validity to the interpretation of the data. These data sources are briefly introduced below with more detail on each being provided in subsequent Chapters.

4.6.1 The Vice Chancellor's Reports

Since 1979 UCT has annually published a "Vice-Chancellor's Report". These Reports are used by the University leadership as vehicles to project an image of UCT to both staff and the public. As such I believe that they both deliberately and unconsciously provide a window into the changing institutional climate at UCT over the twenty seven years. I trace the development of the concepts of change and transformation and the role of the texts (in the broadest sense) in shaping these concepts. Quantitative analyses are used to support and contradict rhetoric. Recognizing that language constructs "*versions of social reality ...to achieve social objectives*" (Cresswell, 1998, p. 88), I also use an analysis of the leadership's change and transformation rhetoric as captured in these Reports to provide the context for the change initiatives I focus on in the next Chapters.

In performing the analyses of the Reports, questions are asked of the text as suggested by Parker (1999, p. 6 and 7). The first question asks is "*What different meanings are at work in the text?*" Here the analysis looks for contradictions in what has been written as the dominant cultural myth and the activities outlined. A second question asks: "*How are these meanings constructed?*" A gendered lens gives additional insight to intent and outcome. Parker's third question: "*What are these contradictory systems of meaning doing?*" provides insights into power structures and struggles.

The analysis focuses on the discourses of race and gender, both central components of transformation in the 'new South Africa'.⁸ I believe that in the white

⁸ "*The discourses of racism and sexism are deeply entrenched in the institutional structure and permeate every level of the organisational structure from student to academics to administrators*" (Potgieter and Moleko, 2004, p. 92,93)

male environment of the previously colonial university, race and gender are the aspects of transformation that are most threatening to the majority of men, and accordingly the most difficult to achieve.

More detail on the methodology used in analyzing these Reports is given in Chapter 5.

4.6.2 Selection of the gender-based change initiatives

The rationale for selecting the University of Cape Town as the primary unit of analysis has been discussed above. Both internal and external pressures have been brought to bear on the institution to bring about change. While the corporate discourse of the Reports celebrates successes and expresses intent for change, it gives little indication of the underlying forces for change or the ways in which change is actually being effected. In order to explore these, in the second phase of my research, I use gender based change initiatives as case studies embedded in the case institution to provide the focus around which data of relevance to the Research Objectives is gathered.

Over the years covered by the Reports there have been several initiatives that have had a gender focus within the institution. These have targeted both students and staff and the academic, work and personal spheres. Examples include the establishment of research and teaching units like the African Gender Institute and the Equal Opportunities Research Project; and units addressing issues of sexuality such as the Sexual Harassment Office and the HIV Aids Unit. There have also been three initiatives to facilitate women's career development: the establishment of child care facilities at UCT, the Emerging Researcher Programme which targets young women and black researchers, and the HERS-SA programme for women's leadership development.

As described above, an early focus of my study was the role of women as change agents and therefore an initial criterion in selecting my change initiatives was that a woman or several women had been instrumental in bringing about the change.

Secondly, in order to eliminate any distortion that hierarchical privilege might have had on the gendered power dynamics, I purposively chose initiatives that had been spearheaded by 'ordinary' women at different (not senior leadership) levels in the institution. These criteria, combined with my knowledge of the institution led me to identify four possible embedded cases. Availability and accessibility of key participants was an important factor in selecting the possible initiatives. The four initially identified were the establishment of the Educare Center, the establishment of the HIV Aids Unit, the formation of HERS-SA and the Emerging Researchers Programme recently initiated by the University Research Development Office. I felt that these change initiatives responded to different historic and environmental contexts and covered different facets of women's realities. The Educare Centre addressed the interaction between work and family having a particular impact on women early in their careers. The HIV Aids Unit also reached young women and brought sexual politics and personal health issues to the workplace. Both HERS-SA and the Emerging Researchers initiatives were aimed at the professional and intellectual development of women in the academic environment, the latter looking at their early career development and HERS-SA aiming at developing leadership potential.

Fortunately the Case Study approach is flexible (Yin, 1994), and although I obtained permission from the University Ethics in Research Committee to use the institution as a case study, later specific permission to conduct research around the Emerging Researchers Programme was denied by the Research Development Office. I had already commenced interviews around the other three embedded initiatives and, as I started analyzing the data, it became clear that the quantity of the data could become excessive and that greater focus was needed. (Hartley (1994) comments on how the case study approach is acknowledged to be labour intensive.) I was also finding that each study was providing extremely rich data. Because my personal interest in gender equity in higher education focuses on women moving into leadership, I took the decision to narrow my gender-based change initiatives down to two that directly impact the career development of women in higher education.

The initiatives finally selected cover a number of differing perspectives. The first of these is historical context. Each is situated in a different historical context. Together

they cover the early gender activism on the part of individuals in the 1970s and the forceful internal and external pressures for transformation that exist after ten years of democracy. Over this time period both the external political environment and the internal transformation focus of the institution have changed. The introduction of equity and anti-discrimination policies is an overt change to the environment, as are the differing leadership styles and priorities of the three Vice Chancellors that have led the University over the past three decades.

It is important to clarify the role of 'history' in my study. As transformation is a process which takes place over time, I argue that an awareness of chronology and historical context is important to understanding drivers and processes of change. However, the purpose of my research is not to construct a history of transformation but to explore evolving processes of negotiation around change and transformation. History presents an interpretation of events and multiple interpretations and histories are possible. I have specifically chosen to highlight the version presented by leadership for public consumption as I believe that discourse analysis of this provides valuable insights into the institutional culture. Later this is enriched with the personal historic recollections of individual participants.

A second variable pertains to the career stage being addressed by the change initiative. The first initiative focuses on facilitating the early career development of young women students and staff. The second looks at the later career development, as the women move into senior academic or professional positions.

It is also worth noting that additional perspective is obtained from the different feminist motivations underlying the two selected initiatives. The focus on child care addresses the inequalities women face because of the multiple roles that society expects of them. The HERS-SA programme directly challenges the patriarchal culture which serves to exclude women from senior positions.

I have worked from the perspective that focusing on two studies allows for comparison and contrast between them while not overloading the project with data. Accordingly I have selected the two which are outlined below. In doing this I took cognizance of variables discussed above (historical context, career stage and

theoretical feminist position). In addition, I made use of my experience of the institution to select gender-based change initiatives which have resulted in different institutional outcomes: one has been integrated into institutional structures, the other has moved out of the institution. Both have the potential to make a broader impact on the gendered climate of the institution.

The UCT Educare Centre

In the section headed “*Student Activities*” the 1982 Vice Chancellor’s Report makes the first mention of the crèche.

Some years ago the SRC [Students Representative Council], conscious of the number of young mothers who would not otherwise be able to work or register for postgraduate, or even undergraduate, courses, started a campus crèche, with no support and even some opposition from the university establishment. The latter has now caught up and from the beginning of 1983 this will be run as a university crèche, for the benefit of staff and students, and the university as a whole. (Saunders, 1982, p. 10).

I have selected the Educare Centre for my first study. In the 1970s women students and staff began raising awareness of the dual role of women as both students/workers and mothers and began agitating for a crèche on campus. This was seen as a necessary step to level the playing fields, easing the burden of their dual role, but (it is worth noting) not challenging it. Whilst the aim was to provide a specific service to women with children, thereby making their lives easier, the establishment of the crèche was also a tacit recognition that the University could not and did not discriminate against women with children. Data used in this study came from depth interviews with purposively selected participants and documentation from the University Archives.

HERS-SA

From the early 1990’s the leadership discourse acknowledges that both academic and administrative staff at UCT are ‘*overwhelmingly white and male*’ (Saunders, 1991, p. 25) and equal opportunities and employment equity become key themes. In common with higher education in most other countries this inequity at UCT is most pronounced in senior positions. Despite acknowledgement of this as an issue and

the establishment of national and University equity policies, the Vice Chancellor's Reports do not highlight any strategies to address the paucity of women in leadership positions in the institution. However, in 2000 an initiative started within UCT to address this specific issue – HERS-SA. HERS-SA is a programme aimed at the professional development of women in, or aspiring to, senior positions in higher education. Whilst still receiving some support from UCT, it has never been institutionalized, and has in fact moved out of the University. As I am the key initiator of HERS-SA this analysis makes use of personal knowledge and involves a high degree of self-reflexivity. My personal experience of the initiative is integrated with data from depth interviews with eight purposively selected participants, and with personal records about HERS-SA.

The complementarity of the selected change initiatives

The two cases were selected to provide a complementary approach to qualitative data of relevance to my three research objectives. In both studies I am looking at gender-based change as a component of transformation in a higher education institution, attempting to understand the dynamics of this change and how it is affected by the gendered culture of the institution. Whilst the need for child care was raised in 1970s, stimulating a series of actions and reactions that resulted in an established Centre on campus, HERS-SA activities are more recent and have not resulted in any formal structure within the University. The student focus on opposition to apartheid in the 1970s created a climate of activism which included gender-based activism. In the democratic South Africa at the end of the twentieth century, the University's focus was more on transformation which focused on race, rather than gender. (See analysis of Vice Chancellor's Reports, Chapter 5). The Educare Centre was the initiative of senior students within the institution, and was to provide assistance to women with young children who were working or studying. In contrast the impetus for HERS-SA originated outside the University and it was clearly aimed at women in or aspiring to leadership. My personal relationship to both initiatives is also very different. Previous to this study I had never encountered the Educare Centre on campus and accordingly, although much of my data was obtained from people whom I know, I had no personal knowledge of the initiative. This contrasts with my intimate involvement with HERS-SA and complements the

more arms-length analyses of the Vice Chancellor's Reports and the Educare Centre initiative.

	Educare Centre	HERS-SA
Initiation	1970s	Late 1990s
Initiators	Senior students	Donors, a senior woman
Product in 2006	Established centre, building	Off-campus NPO ⁹
Target women	Mothers with young children	Senior women, those aspiring to be leaders
Rationale	Career development, often at start of career	Career development, usually later career
Feminist rationale	Women's multiple roles	Challenging patriarchy
Relationship to researcher	Distant	Intimately involved

Table 2. Summary of complementarity of the two selected initiatives

4.6.3 Documentation

The collection and archiving of documentation about an initiative is a key indicator of institutionalization. The selection of what documentation is officially cataloged and stored, and where, gives insight into the organization's perspective of an initiative. This is the rationale for my selection of documentation related to the Educare Centre. In this study I specifically make use of documents formally stored in the University Archives to provide additional perspective and context to the interviews. The documents enable me to construct a contextual chronology of the development of the Educare Center. Analysis of the content and discourse in extracts from the documents also provides triangulation to the memories of the participants, providing

⁹ Not-for-Profit Organization

the additional perspective of an institutional lens. However it must be noted that my use of these documents differs from detailed analysis undertaken to study the Vice Chancellor's Reports. I make use of the officially archived documentation on the Educare Centre to provide a set of reference points which offer a corroborative framework for the analysis of interview data. A list of the documentation quoted is given in Appendix 2.

There is no formal archiving or storage of documentation relating to HERS-SA within the University. This reflects both the newness of the initiative and the distance of HERS-SA from the institutional structures. With a greater number of interviews, less use is made of documentation in the HERS-SA study, and the few documents that are referred to come from my personal files.

4.7 Management of Interview data

Semi-structured interviews are the major source of data for this study. This approach is based on the assumption that it is possible to gain sociological insight by listening to people talking and to construct knowledge by interpreting what they say and how they say it. As King (1994) has pointed out, such interviews are appropriate in studies such as mine where there is a focus on the meaning of particular phenomena to participants and where individual historical accounts are required of how a particular phenomenon developed.

Using Kvale's analogies (1996), I use the interview situation more as a 'traveler' than a 'miner', with interview questions designed to encourage the participant to take me on a tour of his or her experiences in the case institution, associated with either HERS-SA or the Educare Centre. In this way the interview becomes a site of knowledge construction with the interviewer and interviewee as participants in the process (Mason, 2002, p. 227). This requires a flexible approach to the interview questions which are used more to stimulate and guide discussion than to provide specific answers. In order to address the four main Theory Questions the interview schedule was constructed around three main themes:

1. The context within which the change initiative developed

2. The process of effecting the initiative
3. Perceptions of the impact of the initiative on an institutional and personal level.

Initial questions asked during the interview were specific and as the interview developed they broadened into exploring more abstract perceptions related to the impact of the initiatives. The questions were not strictly adhered to in the interviews, but served as a check that relevant issues had been raised. Participants were encouraged to digress to talk about incidents and provide insights which they felt were significant. Appendix 3 gives samples of the Interview Schedules used for both studies.

Sample selection

My insider position in the University was used in the initial selection of participants. In both studies I used my knowledge of the institution to purposively identify people to interview. In some cases, these interviews suggested other participants in snow-ball fashion. As a result, almost all of the participants interviewed were known to me, and I make known my relationship to each of the participants in documenting the context of the interview. More detail of the rationale for the sample selection in each study is given in the relevant Chapters (6 and 8). Each interview was conducted in the participant's office in the belief that people feel more comfortable in their own territory.

Data handling

All interviews were transcribed by the researcher shortly after each interview. The transcripts were then entered into NVIVO software which was used to assist with the analysis of the data. The theoretical framework guided the initial coding of the data. Thereafter inductive processes were used to identify emergent themes through subsequent readings of the coding reports. Recognizing the value of letting the data speak for itself, I make extensive use of quotations in presenting the analysis of these themes. As a feminist researcher I locate myself on the same critical plane as the researched and reject the dichotomy between subjectivity and objectivity. In the analyses I also acknowledge the political purpose of the research. I recognize that my identity and those of my participants influence the data and therefore I present analyses of each of their positionalities before moving on to explore the multiple

truths that emerge. Each participant is introduced as an individual, positioned in the institution and with his or her own gender perspective. Depth analysis of each interview is used to construct these brief introductions. The data from the various interviews was then used to build up a picture of the change initiative integrating the perspectives of different participants, but acknowledging the possibility of many truths. Critical to the analysis of the data was the use of a gendered lens to expose the political context and power dynamics integral to effecting change in the different environments and circumstances.

Ethics

Permission was obtained from the University's Ethics in Research Committee to undertake this research on campus. All participants were fully informed about the subject matter of the research and agreed (in writing) to the interviews being recorded and transcribed. Participants were assured of confidentiality and that their names would not be used in the write-up of the research. However, by virtue of their position several participants are easily recognized by those familiar with the institution. In order to address this ethical dilemma and protect the participants, in cases where valuable, but possibly controversial, quotes could be damaging or embarrassing, I have taken the decision not to attribute them to any specific participant. All participants were thanked by email after the interview.

My location with respect to this research presents particularly challenging ethical dilemmas. I was conducting research in an institution which was currently, and for many years had been, employing me. My participants are colleagues. As a woman I represent 'the other' on whose behalf it could be argued I was doing my research. As I have explained, the very selection of my research topic arose from 'discriminatory' personal experiences in the case institution. Furthermore my research methodology which takes a feminist reflexive approach challenges the hegemonic epistemology of the institution. My findings have the potential to contradict the image that the University wishes to portray of itself. And from all of this, I hope to gain a PhD from this same University. The potential power imbalances represent an ethical challenge both for me and the University as the award-granting institution. I take courage from works such as *The Wits*

WonderWoman Book, Buttons and Breakfasts (Orr, Rorich and Finuala, eds., 2006) and Hear Our Voices (Mabokela and Magubane, eds., 2004).

4.8 Summary

In this Chapter I traced the development of the theory on which I have based my research and how this led to my Central Research Question: How are gender-based transformations effected in the higher education environment and what is this able to tell us about negotiating transformation? This is explored through Theory Questions which focus on the gender culture of a case institution, the dynamics of gender-based change. The analysis looks at the intersection of culture and change dynamics and suggests the implications of these for negotiating institutional transformation.

A feminist, qualitative approach is taken in designing the methodology to address these questions. Feminist research recognizes the validity of women's issues as topic for study and allows a political agenda. It permits me to locate myself in the research process and recognizes the impossibility of separating the research from the researcher. I believe that a feminist qualitative approach is best suited to the elusive and complex nature of the key concepts underlying my research. However I also acknowledge how the choice of my research topic and my feminist qualitative approach present ethical dilemmas.

Building on personal experience I have chosen the University of Cape Town to be the case study, and two carefully selected feminist change initiatives embedded in the case institution are investigated in detail. Tools of discourse analysis are applied to the leadership rhetoric and the data from the change initiatives, and analysis of verbal and written text is used to highlight both the institutional culture and the dynamics of gender-based change, and to explore the various perceptions of my key concepts.

Four main genres of data are used in the research. The feminist approach I have taken allows me to integrate my personal experience into the research. This goes

beyond the design and interpretation of the research to include personal experiences as data. A second source of data is the annual Vice Chancellor's Reports published by the University. This is complemented by interview transcripts from semi-structured interviews on the two purposively selected change initiatives, and, where appropriate, these are enriched by referring to archived and personal documents.

The analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports is presented in the next Chapter, and this is followed by analyses of the two gender-based change initiatives. Chapters 6 and 7 use the UCT Educare Centre as a vehicle to address the Theory Questions and Chapters 8 and 9 bring in the added perspectives around the HERS-SA initiative.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 5

5.1 THE DISCOURSE OF TRANSFORMATION IN THE ANNUAL VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORTS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 summarized some of the debates around impacts of globalization on higher education and focused in on the South African situation where institutions are facing pressures from both globalization and the need for social transformation. Government-initiated mergers were a dominant force for transformation in many of the South African institutions. Those few institutions not required to merge, mostly historically-white universities, are challenged to interpret the meaning of transformation in their particular situations. The University of Cape Town, the institution chosen as the case institution, is one such institution. Examining the discourse of change and transformation at UCT over the past three decades provides insight into the evolving understandings of transformation in South African higher education. Over this period, in response to external and internal political pressures, the language of change and transformation has been a growing theme in the University's image of itself.

In this Chapter I briefly introduce the University of Cape Town and its primary public relations document, the annual Vice Chancellor's Report. I then outline how I use discourse analysis as a tool to reveal themes of institutional transformation. The subsequent analyses focus on the evolution of understanding of change and transformation in the Reports, and the three themes of transformation most relevant to my mapping of the institutional culture, namely accountability and efficiency, race and gender. The final summary explores the way in which the Reports portray the interaction between race and gender and what this conveys about the leadership's perception of the need to bring about gender-based change.

5.2 The University of Cape Town

The University of Cape Town is the oldest higher education institution in South Africa. The forerunner to the University of Cape Town, the South African College, was established in 1829, and in 1918 the College moved to its current location and was constituted as the University of Cape Town. The new University was established along the lines of liberal western universities to provide education for the young men in the colony, with the majority of its staff coming from the United Kingdom. Phillips (2003, p. 122) describes the structure of the University as being “*a product of deliberate colonial emulation rather than independent national innovation*”. It had a ‘Council’ and ‘Senate’ with a collegial committee structure as the main instruments for decision-making. ‘Academic freedom’ was a cornerstone of the development of the new university. Academic freedom was taken to include:

- The freedom to decide which students it wished to admit
- The freedom to decide who should teach within the institution
- The freedom for university teachers to teach “*the truth as they see it*” without sectional, political, religious or ideological pressure from any quarter (Centlivres, 1979, p. 19).

In 1948 when the Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa and started eroding institutions’ rights to admit or employ whomever they chose, UCT, along with other mainly English-speaking universities slowly became involved in a campaign of civil disobedience centred around the government’s legislated racial separation of staff and students. This opposition to apartheid served to position white English-speaking universities within the higher education structure in the country. They were tolerated outsiders within the country, who, through maintaining international connections, saw themselves as part of the global community of scholars. Whilst there was a pride in challenging the policies of the apartheid government of the day which gave the English-speaking universities a self-image of being liberal institutions, fighting for the rights of the masses, there were also outspoken criticisms from those ‘masses’ who saw universities as benefiting from apartheid policies and being complicit in maintaining the white supremacist *status quo*. This complex positioning both internationally and within the divided South African society is

captured in some of the documentation for public consumption put out over the years by the University. In more recent years UCT, like other South African universities, has been adapting to the new democracy, to the pressures brought about by significant restructurings of the higher education landscape, and to increased government demands for equity and accountability. All of these are reflected in the Vice Chancellor's Reports.

Today UCT positions itself as the leading research university in South Africa, backing this up with statistics from the National Research Foundation¹⁰. It also sees itself globally positioned as a "*world-renowned institution*" (Ndebele, 2005, p. 2). UCT has defined its niche as being a medium-sized, contact university with a focus on research excellence. In 2005, UCT had 22 079 students, 24.5 per cent of whom were enrolled for postgraduate degrees (Ndebele, 2005). UCT is also arguably one of the most diverse campuses in South Africa, having students from all over South Africa, from over 90 different countries around the world, and from a variety of religious persuasions. Around half of all students in 2005 were black, and half were women. Some 2400 permanent staff work at the University, about a third of whom are academic staff. In 2005 just over half the total staff but only 22% of the academics were black, and women comprised some 53% of the total staff and 34% of the academic staff (Ndebele, 2005).

5.3 The Annual Vice Chancellor's Reports

Each year, since 1977, the University of Cape Town has issued a "Vice Chancellor's Annual Report". The initial aim of this Report, as stated in the first one is "*...to share, more intimately and more animatedly than an impersonal recitation of figures will allow, something of the UCT story – our achievements, problems, hopes and ambitions.*" (Luyt, 1977, p. 1). These Reports were distributed within and outside the University. The 28 Reports (1977 – 2005, - no report was issued in 2004) provide a

¹⁰ The National Research Foundation has a system of international peer review whereby researchers in science, engineering and the social sciences and humanities are rated. An A rating means that the researcher is a leader in his or her field worldwide. The University of Cape Town has 21 of the 55 A-rated researchers in higher education institutions in South Africa. (Source NRF web page: http://www.nrf.ac.za/evaluation/Content/Facts/display_all.asp, accessed 10 November 2006)

record of how the leadership of the institution wished to portray the University. Issued under the name of the most senior officer of the University, the Vice Chancellor, the Reports form a rich data set, highlighting issues considered important by the leadership. As such they give insight into the University's evolving relationship to its political and social environment, its aspirations, new developments, and which problem areas and achievements it wished to acknowledge publicly.

Each Report tells a number of stories. Firstly it is a reflection of the political and social environment in which the University is operating and highlights the extent to which activities within the University respond to this environment. Secondly, each Report highlights activities that are deemed to present the University to the community in a positive light, that is, it is clearly a public relations document. The sophistication of this aspect of the Report develops over time as the Report format becomes glossier showing greater attention to presentation and style. Thirdly, the Reports articulate a corporate identity and direction: presenting an idealized image of the institution and a pointer to what the institution would like to become. Fourthly, an analysis of what is in the Report and what is not, what is highlighted, celebrated, taken seriously and what is not, the language used and stories told, gives additional insight into the underlying culture and beliefs within the institution.

In this research I use the Reports to map leadership discourses on change and transformation in the institution. The Reports, because they form a continuous record from a particular perspective, are a powerful data source about discourses of salience to management. Transformation is about changing individual and group perceptions and the realities of these changes as they impact experiences of institutional culture. It involves image and intent but also commitment and risk. As part of conveying the intent, the University has issued a number of pamphlets and reports, both published and unpublished, on its transformation (in 1993, 1996, 2000, and 2004). These reports give statistical data and celebrate policy and other changes with a clear intention of 'selling' UCT's transformation initiatives. However, I believe that an analysis of the discourse in the Vice Chancellor's Reports has the potential to provide a more complex picture of transformation in the institution. The Reports give insight into the development of leadership perceptions of transformation

and provide the opportunity to compare these perceptions with the stories and institutional priorities highlighted in the Reports.

5.4 Analysis Methodology

For the researcher the Reports present both a particular story of the institution over the twenty nine years and a source of text for interpretive analysis. In this research I draw on both these sources of data to undertake an analysis of the development of leadership discourse on transformation in the institution.

In Chapter 3 I summarized perspectives on the meaning of transformation in higher education in South Africa, considering the viewpoints of a number of authors. The Education White Paper 3, "A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education" speaks of the need to "*redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities*" (1997a, 1.1). In this study of transformation I see the White Paper's needs as a subset of a more all-embracing process of organizational change. In looking at the University's rhetoric on transformation over the years I believe that it is important to go beyond the immediate political definition. Accordingly the analysis will take a broader view of transformation and, in the words of Rao and Stuart, identify changes that move the organization

"in a direction that can accommodate, cherish, and foster the creativity and the productivity of women, men, young, old, people of colour, people of differing ability. We want organisations to incorporate goals and values that are life-affirming, human-centred, and justice-oriented." (Rao and Stuart, 1997, p. 10, 11).

In performing the analysis of the Reports I use this definition of transformation and the background on transformation in South African higher education outlined in Chapter 3 to identify some of the many different themes of transformation. Transformation in the higher education environment in South Africa can be represented as affecting a multifaceted complex of interdependent interactions. Debates over race, gender, class, ethnicity, efficiency, accountability, culture,

language, collegiality, academic integrity, epistemology and social responsiveness all contribute towards shaping an environment which is differentially perceived by different individuals and groups. These perceptions also shift with time and are influenced by external pressures and opportunities. Transformation takes place as changes emerge in response to these debates. These changes can be overt and obvious or more subtle. Their impact can be detected in the many different norms that contribute towards the institutional culture. These include policies, who makes up the in-crowd, the profile of the leadership and lower ranks, power groupings, the way language is used, what is said and what is not said, what behaviour and who gets rewarded, how the institution tells its story, the rituals, values and symbols of the institution, what is taken seriously, what is ignored, what gets followed up, what is celebrated and what is retained in the institutional memory.

Discourse analysis has been used extensively in feminist research and Burman and Parker (1993, p. 9) describe it as being *“used to comment on social processes which participate in the maintenance of structures of oppression”*. Discourse analysis recognizes the power of language not only to express meanings, but also to create meaning by the way that it is constructed. Language organized into discourses *“has an immense power to shape the way that peopleexperience and behave in the world”* (Burman and Parker, 1993, p 1). In looking at transformation, analyzing this formative role of the language used in the Reports gives insight beyond an historical analysis. In my research I borrow from some of the tools used in discourse analysis, identifying themes, contradictions and silences in the Reports’ discourse around transformation. Questions asked are, why is this being reported on? Is there evidence in the report that supports (or contradicts) what is being claimed? What is not being said and why? How is language being used to exert power? What does all of this tell us about transformation in the institution? The annual UCT Vice Chancellor’s Reports are essentially corporate documents whose purpose is to impress upon the reader the worth of the University. As such they can be described as rhetoric. An analysis of this corporate rhetoric can provide another dimension to assessing the process of transformation over and above the presentation of ‘facts’.

To facilitate analysis of the 28 Reports, the complex concept of transformation was disaggregated into a number of interacting themes. A matrix was compiled of the

themes of transformation that emerged as most significant and their potential **areas of impact** on the institutional climate (See Appendix 4). Each Report was analyzed using this matrix. The **themes** of transformation used in the analysis were: race, gender, efficiency/accountability, epistemology, and social responsiveness. (Class and ethnicity, also relevant cultural themes, were excluded as they were only referred to indirectly, if at all.) An additional column labeled “General” was included to facilitate recording any impacts on aspects of university life potentially significant to transformation but not falling within one of the 5 selected themes.

Change can be detected as it impacts different aspects of the institutional culture. In order to facilitate the analysis, the most significant of these were separated out. The **impact areas** upon which the analysis focused were: policies, who is in-crowd, profile of leadership, profile of lower ranks, power groupings, language, what is not said, appearance, who gets rewarded, behaviour rewarded, symbols, rituals, values, organizational structure, what is taken seriously, what is ignored, what is followed-up, institutional memory, what is celebrated, sports and extramural activities, and how the institution tells its story. The matrix thus allows an analysis over the 28 years of how the different themes of transformation impact on different aspects of institutional culture.

The Reports were analyzed in chronological order, starting with the first one in 1977. In addition, each time an innovation was reported for the first time, this was annotated. Note was also made of reference to “*change*” and “*transformation*”. Once all 28 matrices had been completed, a chronological analysis of the development of each of the identified themes of transformation was undertaken. For the themes of transformation most relevant to this research, this analysis was enriched by borrowing some interpretive analytic tools from the practice of discourse analysis. Visual data such as layout and photographs were also regarded as text for analysis. In addition gender statistics were extracted from the text to provide triangulation to what was written.

One of the tensions that emerges in this process is that between what is written in the Reports and my personal experience as someone with nearly 40 years of experience in the case institution. There are times when personal experience would

suggest emphases different from those taken in the Reports, or when the Reports seem to be avoiding issues personally perceived to be significant. Cognizant of this, in this Chapter, the analysis is taken only from data as presented in the Reports. In later Chapters, the discourse of the Reports is compared with the experiences of individuals in the institution, building on the model used by Höpfl in her work on applying discourse analysis to organizations (Höpfl, 1999).

5.5 The evolution of the Vice Chancellor's Reports

The development of the concept and purpose of the Vice Chancellor's Reports over the years can be traced in their style and appearance, which become increasingly sophisticated. The first annual Vice Chancellor's Report in 1977 was in A5 format, on thick matt paper and was black and white throughout, including the cover photograph. It was only nine pages long and written in the first person. From the following year the Report had a full colour cover and contained colour photographs and graphs. This format remained essentially the same until 1995, by which time the Report comprised 47 pages. When Dr Saunders assumed the Vice Chancellorship in 1981, he continued the personal style, strengthening it by signing the end of each Report up until 1991. In 1996, coinciding with the start of Dr Ramphel's Vice-Chancellorship, the Report format changed to a glossy A4 publication, liberally sprinkled with colour photographs. The length of the Report in 1999 grew to a massive 76 A4 pages, but since then has reduced in length. The final Report analyzed, 2005, is 60 pages long and has an elegant emphasis on UCT's blue, white and black corporate colours.

Since 2001 there have been abrupt changes in style of the Report, possibly suggesting some interrogation as to the purpose of the Report. Unlike any of the previous Reports, the 2002 Report is no longer a personal reflection on the year, but more like a corporate annual report, focusing on and highlighting the actions of different senior executives. Visually there is also a strong contrast between the 2002 and more recent Reports, with the latter containing many photographs of people doing things (not of senior executives as in 2002), giving the Report a vibrant, active

feel. The 2005 Report for the first time uses the Western Cape's three official languages and the focus is clearly on transformation across the institution.

This development of the Reports itself reflects a path of transformation. The initial personal reflection on the "*UCT story*" evolves into a mouthpiece against government policies during the 1980s when the Reports include verbatim a number of formal statements of protest. In the late 1990s they become fully-fledged public relations documents with numerous full page photographs. Most recently the 'corporate-type' 2002 Report which displays very little intimacy or animation, gives way to become a persuasive advocate of transformation in the latest Reports,

There are a number of themes that run through the Reports which will not be considered in detail here as they are not seen to be key indicators of transformation. These include the regular presentation of financial information, detailing of new infrastructure, and the celebration of international connections. From the beginning financial information is clearly seen as a key component of the Reports. A constant theme is the shortage of funds, cuts in government subsidy and the need to exercise financial constraint. Another major theme throughout the Reports concerns buildings and infrastructural development, and the fund-raising associated with these. Photographs of UCT and its buildings (often not including any people) are almost a trademark of particularly the early Reports. International linkages, whether travel of UCT staff or visitors to UCT, also form a consistent theme, but it is only in 1992 and 1993 that contact with the rest of the African continent becomes a topic.

Over the years information on student activities and celebration of research achievements develops to become an important part of the Reports. The earliest Report while emphasizing the University as part of the community, barely mentions students. However, from the second Report, statistics of students by race and gender are given in increasing detail. Interestingly the last Report (2005) while providing other statistics (eg staff racial profiles) does not give a detailed desegregation of students by race, implying that student demography is no longer seen as a transformation issue at UCT. Somewhat surprisingly research only started receiving attention in the mid-1980s, prior to this the reader was referred to a separate Research Report. Only from the 1989 Report is detail given of specific

research activities and researchers. This aspect of the University's activities is highlighted more in subsequent Reports, with emphases on new research centres, UCT's successes in receiving research funding, and celebrating the external ratings of UCT's researchers.

5.6 The concepts of “change” and “transformation” in the Reports

As mentioned in Chapter 2, studies of organizations internationally show that there has been a growing awareness over the past 40 years of the need for them to develop and adapt to the social and economic environments in which they operate. In the isolated, apartheid South Africa of the 1970's the first Vice Chancellor's Report shows awareness of this climate of change and concludes with a section on “*The Speed and Course of Change*” (Luyt, 1977, p. 9). However the focus here is not on change within the organization itself. Sir Richard Luyt points to the potential for the University to influence change “*by keeping our search for knowledge true, our ideas bright and our ideals high*” (Luyt, 1977, p. 9). This concept of change as being something ‘out there’ which UCT can influence, rather than something taking place within the organization predominates until the late 1980s. This is captured in phrases such as “*to contribute ...to the evolution of a new society in this country...*” (Saunders, 1981, p. 12) and “*I am sure thatthe University will play its role in the changes that are inevitable and urgently needed in South African society.*” (Saunders, 1985, p. 20). However, in 1989, Dr Saunders links this transformatory role required of the University (the word “transformation” is used here in the Reports for the first time¹¹), to change in the organization itself. “*This will also involve considerable change within the University itself, blending old traditions with new ones so that the UCT of tomorrow will be different from that of today.*” (Saunders, 1989, p. 3).

Whilst change is reported across a spectrum of activities, there is incoherence around the interpretation of “transformation” over the period of the Reports. As early

¹¹ He uses the word to describe the change process leading to a post-apartheid South Africa (Saunders, 1989, p. 3). Here he uses the word ‘change’ to refer to the University, and ‘transformation’ to refer to the country.

as 1992, Dr Saunders raises the need to create “*a proper institutional culture...to ensure that all members of our community attain their full potential*” (Saunders, 1992, p. 4). This is related to discussion of discrimination with respect to race, beliefs and gender. In the 1993 Report, the Vice Chancellor celebrates the publication of “*an important booklet*”, “*The Transformation of the University of Cape Town*” which he describes as recording “*some of the many developments at UCT in its drive for equal opportunity and black advancement.*”(Saunders, 1993, p. 3)

Again in 1994, against the background of the change to the first democratic government in South Africa, UCT is portrayed as a transforming institution. For the first time transformation is discussed in some detail in the 1994 Report which emphasizes that transformation is not new to UCT: “*The record of the past decade demonstrates that transformation is not a recent phenomenon at UCT, but a continuous process of anticipating and addressing future priorities, and doing what we believe to be right.*”(Saunders, 1994, p. 4). The very personal, ethical sentiment displayed in the last phrase gives insight into how UCT leadership was seeing its transformation efforts at that time. Transformation is now viewed retrospectively as captured in the title of a publication “*The Transformation of the University of Cape Town mid 1980s ~ mid 1990s. Promoting Excellence and Equity*” (UCT, 1996) to which the Vice Chancellor draws attention in his Report. Transformation is seen as being internally driven with a major focus on equal opportunity in student access. There is also mention of the establishment of a “*formal transformation forum*” (Saunders, 1994, p. 4) and an Education and Transformation Conference that was held in August of that year. Working groups are reported to have been established to look at a new mission statement, governance structures, access and readmission policies, and a new policy on Ceremonies, Rituals and Symbols was adopted by Senate and Council.

This broad, retrospective perspective of what UCT means by transformation is reiterated in the 1995 Report.

The term “transformation” includes all the strategies we have developed since the early 1980s to promote equality of opportunity and remove the barriers that prevent talented students from gaining access to, or graduating from UCT.....During the early 1990s, when the debate on transformation extended to include various aspects of

university governance, the time was ripe to set up structures offering direct representation to the University's various "sectors" (students, staff, and senate/council/executive) in planning and managing the ongoing process of change. (Saunders, 1995, p. 1).

A whole section of the Report is devoted to the new University Transformation Forum, a broadly representative body established to *"investigate, negotiate and formulate proposals to guide transformation, including governance, at UCT and strive to reach consensus on important issues."* (Saunders, 1995, p. 2). It is interesting to contrast this need *"to reach consensus"* in 1995 with the certainty of *"what we believe to be right"* in 1994. Interestingly, despite this extensive discussion on transformation, the selection of Dr Ramphela, the first woman and the first black person to be a Vice Chancellor in the University, is not heralded as evidence of transformation, but is presented in the 1995 Report as the result of *"participative decision-making"* (p. 1).

An analysis of the content of the Reports of the first half of the 1990s provides evidence of the numerous changes taking place at this time. These are wide-ranging, from responses to globalization (eg the establishment of an International Office) and changes in the external environment (eg the establishment of the Department of Development and Public Affairs) to internal restructuring initiatives to achieve greater efficiencies and wider participation in governance. Projects are set up to scrutinize academic structures, planning processes, and administrative procedures. A new Mission Statement is drafted *"that reflects our role in an emerging democracy rather than in the era of resistance to apartheid."* (Saunders, 1995, p. 4).

In her Reports (1996 – 1999), Dr Ramphela continues to talk of transformation but her Reports emphasize administrative and structural changes. In 1997 she says: *"...it became clear that every facet of our institution would be affected by change"*. She goes on to say *"...we concluded that all our initiatives to transform our structures and systems were complementary and interdependent."* (Ramphela, 1997, p. 2). The first sentence of the 1998 Report clearly indicates Dr Ramphela's transformation emphasis to be top-down and structural, rather than social or cultural. She begins the Report by saying: *"1998 was a year of structural and systemic change at UCT as the process of transformation, envisaged by the Mission Statement we adopted in*

1996, *continued to unfold.*" (Ramphela, 1998, p. 3). She qualifies this by adding: "*Change at UCT is academically driven*" (p.3), and she frequently makes reference to "*our vision of being a World-Class African University*".

Her particular perspective of transformation is evident in the 1999 report in which she states:

Transformation of Higher Education in South Africa is lagging far behind that taking place in other parts of the world as universities adapt to develop new ways of contributing to socio-economic and political development. [New Paragraph] This role is now all the more critical given the worldwide explosion in information technology and the global economy we now have to work within. Over the past four years, I have sought to position UCT at the forefront of this transformation process to ensure that it is well-equipped to compete on an equal footing internationally, despite our limited resources.
(Ramphela, 1999, p. 1)

A Deputy Vice Chancellor is given the responsibility for "*guiding transformation to meet the objectives set out in our Mission Statement*" (Ramphela, 1996, p. 4). The Mission Statement (which is included before the Contents page of the 1995 and all subsequent reports with the exception of 2002) emphasizes "*educating for life*", "*addressing the challenges facing our society*" and "*equipping people with life-long skills*" (See Appendix 5). Subsequent Reports, however, suggest that the transformation focus has been on the improvement of employment equity statistics, the effecting of the Audit and Integration of Management Systems (AIMS) project and compliance with various new government Acts. Reference in the Reports to transformation forming part of the responsibilities of one of the Deputy Vice Chancellors vanishes without explanation in 2001.

During the late 1990s transformation pressures from the national Department of Education intersect with UCT's transformation initiatives. UCT, like other institutions of higher learning, becomes involved in the government's transformation of the sector: "*several of our recommended amendments were incorporated in the Act [Higher Education Act of December 1997]*" (Ramphela, 1997, p. 12). But in addition UCT is now required to comply with new legislation. In the past UCT's transformation initiatives were internally driven resulting in no small amount of self congratulation. Now, with the development of a restructured higher education

environment, there is an externally driven transformation requirement and UCT is publicly being submitted to comparison with other institutions.

Transformation is not raised as a specific topic in the first two of Professor Ndebele's Reports. However, in the 2002 Report he says:

The challenge is to perpetuate a culture where everyone who chooses to study or work in it will find a place in which they can realize their full potential and become active participants in the academic life of our institution. (p. 7)

He emphasizes that: "*Our greatest challenge remains in the area of transformation*" and details student and staff racial and gender profiles. The paragraph ends with: "*We have thus put transformation issues at the top of UCT's agenda; in particular the issue of setting targets for changes in the staff profile.*" (Ndebele, 2002, p. 6).

Significant however is the fact that earlier in the same report Ndebele highlights the four "*action guides for executive strategic management*" which completely ignore equity or transformation considerations. This is amended in the 2003 Report which focuses specifically on the five "*guides which have informed our actions over the last few years*", with the additional fifth guide being to take account of "*ongoing societal and institutional transformation*" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 5).

This Report devotes a whole section to "*Transformation*" which begins with the statement: "*2003 saw UCT enter a new phase of transformation*" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 5). He goes on to say:

At UCT this transformation is seen as a necessity against the changing landscape for higher education in South Africa. UCT is required to meet this challenge, not only through broadening student admissions and employment equity, but also through practices that impact significantly on institutional culture.

He describes a leadership retreat on transformation resulting in key insights, central of which was "*that transformation should be conceptualized in an integrated framework encompassing leadership and governance, institutional culture, systems and processes, staff diversity, student equity and access, curriculum development, and resourcing.*" The retreat resulted in the Transformation Action Guide "*that will serve as the charter for the implementation of the measures that will be rolled out with rapidity and determination*" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 5). Transformation is to be seen

as a “*mainstream phenomenon*” and a Transformation Manager and Employment Equity Manager were to be employed to monitor and support transformation activities. A Transformation Management Advisory Group was also to be established. He also reported that an Institutional Climate Survey had been conducted. Transformation and employment equity are also referred to by each Faculty, and the impression given by the 2003 Vice Chancellor's Report is that transformation as a broad, all-encompassing concept is indeed the major focus of the institution and that there is now action around this.

This impression is strengthened by the powerful transformation focus of the 2005 Report. The Vice Chancellor speaks of transformation in increasingly sophisticated terms: “*..an integrated and multi-faceted endeavour that must necessarily permeate the university, involving all members of our community and underpinning all activities*” (p. 8). He makes an effort to tie it down to specifics and says that transformation should be understood as a performance management objective. He then devotes three pages to exploring how transformation must affect all aspects of the University from teaching and learning to internal institutional change, from social relationships to budgeting and planning, responding both to students and staff and the national and international environments. He details progress that has been made and says “*In general we have advanced steadily on many aspects and there is much to be proud of*” (p. 9), but recognizes that “*various serious challenges remain*” (p. 10). This theme of change and responsiveness is continued throughout the report which conveys an impression of a caring organization interacting positively with its environment rather than a corporate presenting its performance.

Clearly the interpretation of transformation as articulated in the Reports has evolved over the years, both in response to the changing environment and the different priorities and personalities of the institutional leadership. Initially transformation was seen to be an internally motivated initiative, led by a caring leadership, bravely defying government restrictions. It later became part of a global movement towards efficiency, equity and accountability; something UCT had to participate in to become a “World Class African University”. At this stage, with government pressure for change mounting, there is an element of confusion in the ownership of transformation. Whereas before it was clearly a UCT initiative, from the late 1990s

government was setting measures for elements of transformation. Compliance required internal strategies and new structures and non-compliance held significant threats to the future of the institution. Interestingly, with these structural and policy issues covered by legislation, in the most recent years the Reports show the discourse on transformation to have evolved to encompass the more subtle social and cultural aspects of the workplace. With this, the ownership of transformation shifts back to the institution, and, as the last two Reports show, even to the individual managers: (“...*the pursuit of transformation as a mainstream phenomenon should be a line function responsibility*” (Ndebele, 2003, p5), and “...*transformation is understood as a performance management objective..*” (Ndebele, 2005, p. 8).

When first mentioned the term ‘transformation’ was retrospectively applied with some self-congratulation to past activities. The later Reports suggest that transformation is an elusive ideal to which the University is constantly striving. The more recent Reports highlight the need to gain some consensus within the organization as to what transformation actually means. Measures of transformation started with the demographic statistics of the student body and later included staff demographics. Revised policies and governance structures were also seen as measures of transformation. In the most recent Report there is reference to an Institutional Climate Survey which was conducted “*in order to gain baseline data on staff perceptions of the climate within the University*” (Ndebele, 2003, p. 6) and this theme of consultation and dialogue is continued: “*Ongoing and important dialogue..... informed many implementations, strengthening the delivery on matters related to transformation*” (Ndebele, 2005, p. 9).

Whilst this analysis of change and transformation provides a framework I believe that further analyses of the discourse in the Vice Chancellor’s Reports as it pertains to different themes of transformation can be used to provide a more nuanced assessment of change and transformation at UCT. In particular, I use an analysis of the power relations implicit in the depiction of gender as an indication of transformation. As seen in the section above, gender relationships do not emerge named as a significant transformation issue in the Reports. For this reason I believe that focus on gender can provide insight into some of the more subtle aspects of transformation.

5.7 Analysis of key transformation themes

As mentioned above, the key themes related to institutional transformation that emerged from an analysis of the Reports were: Social Responsiveness, Efficiency / Accountability, Epistemology, Race, and Gender. These broad areas encompass the interaction of the University with its environment, its concept of knowledge, its role in society, its response to external economic, social and political pressures and the more subtle interpersonal relationships that make up the institutional climate. Subsequent analyses of my feminist initiatives showed that the themes of most relevance to my study of institutional culture and change dynamics were those related to interpersonal relationships and the allocation of resources. Accordingly in the sections below I only present a detailed discussion of three of the transformation themes: Efficiency / Accountability, Gender, and Race. (A summary of the findings on Social Responsiveness and Epistemology is provided in Appendix 6.)

5.7.1 Efficiency / Accountability

Increasing accountability and managerialism have been features of higher education across the world, and an analysis of the UCT Vice Chancellor's Reports shows that UCT is no exception. The analysis, in fact, shows this aspect of transformation to be one of the most significant. It forms a theme with ever-increasing intensity from the first mentions of rationalization in 1988, through the growing awareness of the need for accountability of the early 1990s, and the restructurings of the late 1990s to the corporate culture of the 2000s. Early debates around accountability focused on how many and which students should be admitted to the University. This is seen as a key component of the University's accountability to society, and later develops into the rhetoric of 'excellence and equity'. However the main focus of accountability debates is financial, related to the efficient use of resources, including people.

Financial concerns are dealt with in every Report. In the first Report, financial issues comprise a third of the Report, with shortage of funds, rather than accountability

being the focus. By the late 1980s, the need to 'rationalize' to address shrinking resources becomes an issue. Strategies to make better use of resources (for example using the residences for vacation accommodation and the establishment of the UCT Private Hospital) are reported on. Rationalization becomes a key word in the early 1990's, leading to reviews and audits of departments and procedures. Special committees were established and projects initiated "*to improve financial control and reporting of all UCT-administered funds*" (Saunders, 1995, p. 5) and UCT was reported to be "*committed to control expenditure in all areas*" (Saunders, 1995, p. 32). In 1996 a new senior-level post of 'Director of Finance' was created. The late 1990's saw rigorous planning and budgeting, the commencement of the Audit and Integration of Management Systems (AIMS) project, a review of the leadership and management systems, outsourcing to improve efficiencies, a project to look at information management and financial management systems, the introduction of the cost of employment system for all staff with merit-based rather than notch-based increases, and the compilation of a medium term budget framework to eradicate the deficit. Efficiency audits led to massive restructuring of academic units and support departments and decentralizing of responsibilities. Departments were merged, faculties were reduced from ten to six and Deans became 'Executive Deans' with delegated financial responsibility.

Concurrent with the increasing emphasis on financial efficiency and accountability has been the growth in 'management speak' across both the administration and the faculties. A 'teaching contract' was developed for academics in 1998, the Faculty of Health Sciences appointed a Business Development Manager in 2001 and the Science Faculty established a Marketing and Communication Committee. The first sentence of the report on the Student Development and Service Department in the 2000 Report states: "*The vision of the Student Development & Services Department (SDSD) continues to focus on the achievement of efficiency in the provision and delivery of high quality student services....*" (Kaunda in Ndebele, 2000, p. 54). Through-put rates of students have become an important indicator of efficiency and effectiveness, and counts of publications and A-rated scientists are celebrated. A cost-recovery system was introduced for researchers undertaking contract and externally funded research, and in 2001 Senate and Council "*accepted far-reaching plans to introduce a quality assurance culture at UCT.*" (Ndebele, 2001, p. 5). The

format of the 2002 Report clearly shows this management culture. Unlike previous Reports it has a section devoted to Executive Management, with neat photographs of all the Executive Managers, whom the Vice Chancellor refers to as “a superb team” (Ndebele, 2002, p. 4). In contrast, the latest Reports downplay emphasis on accountability, and ‘management speak’ is kept to a minimum.

Over the years there is also a growth in awareness of the role that can be played by marketing and communication in accountability. As mentioned above, this is most clearly demonstrated in the increasingly sophisticated format of the Report, and its shift from being almost a personal letter to being a key marketing and image-presenting tool. Early pictures are of buildings and senior white male academics in formal gowns. Later pictures show diverse students involved in a variety of activities and more informally dressed staff members, including women and people of different races. The 2005 Report is an excellent marketing document, using many presentation, symbolic and stylistic techniques to convey the image of a caring, multi-cultural institution of excellent achievers.

Although the pressure for increased accountability and efficiency has come from constituencies outside the University (society, government, fee-payers, funding agencies, globalization) UCT leadership has clearly seen this as a priority, committing considerable resources, both human and financial, to the numerous audits, new positions and restructurings. In the 1999 Report, Dr Ramphela wrote: “*AIMS is a critical element in UCT’s strategic transformation..*” (Ramphela, 1999, p. 60) and in her overview of Key Issues in the same Report, it is clear that she saw transformation essentially in terms of management efficiency and processes. The intensity of this position has not been maintained by subsequent leadership, although sound financial management and accountability, especially as related to academic endeavors, continue to be emphasized.

5.7.2 Race

Not surprisingly with UCT being situated in an apartheid society, issues explicitly pertaining to race are to be found in all the Reports. The theme of the racial

discourse changes with time, clearly reflecting, and no doubt in response to, the external political and social environment. Over the 28 Reports the reader can track race as becoming ever more personal, slowly reaching deep into the white patriarchal heart of UCT. Initially the discourse is somewhat colonial, describing initiatives to help 'those out there' who are disadvantaged and the predominant racial theme in the early reports takes the form of student assistance to "*blacks*" through SHAWCO (the Students Health and Welfare Centres Organization). It then moves in to opening access to black students, and years later to awareness of the unbalanced racial makeup of the staff. Lack of change in this area leads to reflection on the core values of the institution, and concepts such as reconciliation and institutional culture enter the rhetoric. In this outline of the discourse around race I first look at the way the Reports focus on the students and then on the staff racial profile, before looking at concepts of reconciliation and 'othering'.

Students

The racial composition of the student body is a major theme of the Reports from the early 1980s onwards. This is presented in two ways, the more subtle being the celebration of the establishment of programmes to assist 'students from disadvantaged backgrounds' and of the growth and successes of these programmes, and in the presentation of student racial statistics. The 1980 Report tells of the plans to establish an Academic Support Programme (ASP) in order to provide additional academic support for students "*who for reasons beyond their control – such as inequalities in education – were inadequately prepared for study at UCT*" (Luyt, 1980, p. 1). Whilst race is not mentioned, there is a clear implication that the ASP was aimed at black students. From 1980 onwards the growth and development of the ASP and its branches into engineering, science, law, health sciences and commerce, assumes an important place in the Reports. Increased numbers of black students are celebrated and this trend is strengthened by the Alternative Admissions Research Project, established to enable the University to accept students based on their potential to succeed, not only on school examination results.

Student statistics by race are given from 1978. Until 1993 these are given for the racial categories of the apartheid government, but from 1994 onwards these are conflated into “*black*” with the proportion of African students only again being teased out in 2002 when it was noted that although UCT had 48% of its students who were black, only 9% were African, a proportion that fell far short of the target of 44% proposed in the National Plan for Higher Education. The changes in the way these statistics are presented in itself tells a story of sensitivity to race. For instance the figure of 9% African students in 2002 represents a decrease of 8% from 1993 when the percentage of African students (17.2%) was last given in a Report. From 1994 to 2003 the proportion of black first year students is highlighted. Although this has been over 50% since 1994 (going up to 57% in 2002) it is not reflected in subsequent overall proportions of black students which still remain below the 50% level. Strikingly, the most recent Report (2005), despite its emphasis on transformation, gives no detailed statistics of the racial make-up of the student body beyond a statement that “*the proportion of black students fluctuated at around 50 – 52%*” between 2000 and 2004 (Ndebele, 2005, p. 27).

Increasing the numbers of black (meaning ‘other than white’) students from 8,6% in 1978 to 48% in 2003 can clearly be told as a transformation success story. This increase is seen to result from strong commitment and much effort on the part of the University leadership. Over the years the Reports mention the many initiatives taken and resources assigned to bring this change about. Beyond the establishment of the Alternative Admissions Research Project and the various Academic Support Programmes these include the appointment of a (black) special assistant to the Vice Chancellor to assist black students with issues such as accommodation, raising funds for bursaries for black students, visible leadership support for anti-apartheid activities, leadership intervention with government around student admissions, and the establishment of an employment office through which students could earn money working at the University during vacations.

As portrayed in the Reports this racial transformation of the student body has taken place against the backdrop of UCT’s outspoken commitment to non-racialism. Both the first and the current Mission Statements speak out against racial discrimination. During the Saunders years the Reports tell of confrontations with the apartheid

regime over its racial policies, both at the student protest level and in high-level interactions with government. Full page photographs show the Vice Chancellor addressing a University assembly protesting the government's racial quota system (1983) and intervening with police during a student protest (1985). Strong public statements are included in the Annual Reports and UCT is portrayed as playing a leading role in establishing non-racial education in South Africa. In 1986 a Special University Assembly was held to dedicate the University to non-racialism and protest against government interference. At the policy level, Council and Senate are reported to have approved non-racial policies and in 1990 Dr Ramphela was appointed as Deputy Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Equal Opportunities, bringing a new dimension to the discourse of racial protest.

Staff

Whilst the Reports celebrate the racial transformation of the student body as measured by demographic statistics, little is mentioned about the staff until the early 1990s. Prior to this one or two individual black academics are mentioned and several honorary degrees are awarded to black people. With the appointment of Dr Ramphela as Deputy Vice Chancellor responsible for Equal Opportunities in 1990, there is a greater focus on changing the racial profile of the University staff. An Equal Opportunity Officer was appointed in 1992 and the Reports tell of the establishment of a Racial Harassment Panel in 1993. An Employment Equity Policy was instituted, the racial profile of the staff (only 10,3% black) is decried in the 1994 Report (*"This is an unacceptable situation which we are committed to changing."* (Saunders, 1994, p. 9). Alongside this the 1994 and 1995 Reports show respectively that 2 of the 11 and 3 of 11 newly appointed professors were black! A decision is taken in 1997 to fill academic posts at the entry level in an attempt to open up opportunities for young black people. In 1997 the Report mentions that for the first time all faculties and administrative departments developed equity targets and that *"these targets were backed by strategies to enable black people and women to become equal competitors for posts on our establishment."* (Ramphela, 1997, p. 45.) Among these strategies was the 'Grow Our Own Timber' programme and various Equity Development Programmes in different faculties. Another strategy that was highlighted in the 1997 Report was

progress of employment equity at UCT against the backdrop of transformation" (Ndebele 2005, p. 14). Both Reports mention the Institutional Climate Survey that was conducted "*in order to gain baseline data on staff perceptions of the climate within the University with the view to enhancing retention of black staff.*" (Ndebele, 2003 p. 5-6). Race has now become problematized as an institutional climate issue.

It is also interesting to note that class is completely subsumed in race, and is only indirectly referred to in terms of social responsibility, helping those in 'townships' (black), students who are unable to pay (the implication is that they are black) and the occasional mention of menial workers at UCT (also black). The intersection of race with gender is also worth commenting on. Prior to 1994 and the policies of the new democratic government, race and gender were often bracketed together in policies as human rights issues but gender activism still had a life of its own. This bracketing of the 'other', putting all who differed from the dominant norm into a common group within which one could be exchanged for the other served to obscure the identities of both race and gender. The dominant group thus had only to deal with people who were different from them without having to take cognizance of the distinctive causes, effects and implications of those differences. This vanishing of the separate identities of the 'other' was exacerbated by the new government identifying 'designated groups' which they defined as 'black people, women and people with disabilities'. This, combined with a climate in which activism has decreased in post-apartheid South Africa, has resulted in gender (along with disability) in many ways being disappeared (or made invisible) as issues of racial equity dominate the self-image of our 'post apartheid' society.

5.7.3 Gender

Although gender does not emerge as a significant theme in the Reports it is the focus of my study and it is possible to make gender visible in a number of ways. These range from the positivist listing of statistics and policies, to more subtle readings of language and presentation. Attitudes to gender are also exposed by a critical look at what is celebrated and how the core business of the institution is depicted. Gender becomes visible on the few occasions that issues related specifically to women appear in the Reports, such as the report on the celebration of the Centenary of Women at UCT (1986) and the references to sexual harassment (1989) and instances of rape (1991). Analysis of the profile of gender within the discourse must also be seen in an historical context, as the University reflects the society with which it is relating. Accordingly I start by tracing a chronology of gender awareness in the reports, looking successively at the periods covered by the three Vice Chancellors. Thereafter I explore how gender information is presented and conclude with a summary.

The Apartheid Years

The first paragraph of the 1977 Report clearly shows the masculine nature of the academy at that time. It reads:

The University of Cape Town has never been and never can be an island severed from the broad concerns of men. Lord Goodman, Master of the University College, Oxford, reminded us when he delivered the 18th T B Davie Lecture in the Jameson Hall on August 30, 1977, that 'Universities are as fallible as human institutions as any other body of men joining together for a common cause.' (Luyt, 1977, p. 1.)

However, from the following year (1978) onwards the Reports recognize the presence of women students on campus and give gender-disaggregated student statistics.

Dr Saunders' first Report in 1981 refers for the first time to students as 'men and women', and has the first photograph of a woman student at UCT. This shift in awareness with the start of the 'Saunders era' is evident in the first reporting in 1982

of an initiative on campus with a significant gender impact, the formal incorporation into the University of the crèche that had been started several years earlier by the students. It is notable how Dr Saunders credits this initiative to the students and even refers to the crèche receiving “*some opposition from the university establishment*” (Saunders, 1982, p, 10). Six years later the 1988 Report tells of the new Educare Centre that was built on campus to house the crèche. (This childcare initiative forms the focus of my first study presented in Chapters 6 and 7.) Saunders formalizes his attention to gender in the first University Mission Statement in the 1985 Report. Whilst the major emphasis is on the rejection of any racial discrimination, UCT also

...strives to maintain a strong tradition of non-discrimination with regard to race, and with regard to religion or gender, in the constitution of its student body, in the selection or promotion of its faculty and in its administration. (Saunders, 1985, p. 1)

A section of the 1986 Report celebrates the “Centenary of Women at UCT” (women students) and mentions activities that include “*lectures, plays, social occasions and the raising of funds for bursaries for women students*” (Saunders, 1986, p. 9). The appointment of a woman as the University’s first African professor is also mentioned and, during this year, two of the five honorary degrees were awarded to women. Contrasted with this, the remainder of the 1986 Report contains statistics that show little evidence of women impacting the core academic business of UCT. There is not a single woman heading any of the 38 research centres listed, all the Distinguished Teachers Awards and UCT Fellowships are given to men, and rugby is yet again the sport that is highlighted. This pattern continues. From 1985 when the new Mission Statement (see Appendix 5) denounced discrimination with respect to *inter alia* gender, until 2000 actual figures show little indication of the effectiveness of this goal.

Over the years a number of policies and activities with a gender impact have been recorded in the Reports. In 1988 two decisions were taken in an attempt to improve the remuneration packages received by staff. (At that stage staff salaries were determined by the State subsidy.) The Housing Scheme was extended to all members of staff who are principal breadwinners (previously married women staff members did not qualify), and maternity benefits were increased to allow staff

members up to four months leave on full pay. However, it is interesting that the motivation given in the Report for these changes is not elimination of discrimination, but *“improving UCT’s “salary package” for its staff”* (Saunders, 1988, p. 13). In the 1989 Report rejection of discrimination is given as the motivator for the approval of a policy on Sexual Harassment. The announcement of this is accompanied by a personal threat from the Vice Chancellor: *“Though I hope the need will never arise, I can, if circumstances warrant it, institute disciplinary action against an offender.”* (Saunders, 1989, p. 26).

Sexual Harassment is again taken up in a specific section under a major heading of “Staff Administration” in the 1991 Report. UCT is represented as taking the lead in *“this important area”* (p. 26), having appointed a Committee of Enquiry into Sexual Harassment in 1989. The report from this Committee is described as having been tabled in October 1991 and released to the press *“in the public interest”*, causing *“ongoing debate”*. Action that UCT *“has undertaken and will undertake”* includes the establishment of a sexual harassment panel and the post of *“education officer”*. Concluding this section of the Report the Vice Chancellor refers to the fact that there had been two instances of alleged rape on campus and that *“..the students alleged to be guilty of these crimes were immediately suspended from the University and faced charges in the courts of the land.”* (Saunders, 1991, p. 26.) Sexual harassment is again referred to in the 1993 and the 1994 Reports, and in 2001 a Discrimination and Harassment Office (DISCHO) was established *“as a way of showing the University’s commitment to deal with the “inevitable” issues of harassment and discrimination at UCT”* (Kaunda in Ndebele, 2001, p. 41. Inverted commas are in the original).

The 1991 Report also announced the *“Equal Opportunities Programme”* and the pending appointment of an Equal Opportunity Officer. Commencing the section headed *“Equal Opportunity Policy”*, the Report clearly states: *“UCT’s academic and administrative staff is overwhelmingly white and male. The university has an obligation to ensure that able blacks, as well as women scholars and administrators are not overlooked in its selection processes.”* (Saunders, 1991, p. 25.) However despite the heading of the section, no specific University policy is referred to.

The 'Ramphela' influence

Somewhat surprisingly against this growing focus on equal opportunities in the early 1990's, the Reports make little of the appointment of Dr Mamphela Ramphele, as Deputy Vice Chancellor, the first woman and first black person to hold such a position at UCT. The 1990 Report announces her appointment along with two other new Deputy Vice Chancellors, but the 1991 Report does not even acknowledge her taking up her new duties or indicate what her specific areas of responsibilities were. (In her autobiography she describes her job as "*the executive officer in charge of the Equal Opportunity Portfolio*" (Ramphele, 1995, p. 206).)

From 1992 onwards the annual Reports present evidence of her activities in this portfolio. Senate and Council adopt a general anti-discrimination policy which includes gender and sexual orientation (1992); an Equal Opportunities Officer is appointed (1992); the 1993, 1994 and 1995 Reports contain a specific section detailing the activities of the Equal Opportunities Research Project which includes work on sexual harassment and employment equity at UCT. The idea of establishing a "*policy and research-based Gender Institute in the Western Cape*" is floated in 1993 (Saunders, 1993, p. 9) and, following a FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists) workshop in 1995, the African Gender Institute (AGI) at UCT is launched in 1996. The AGI is highlighted in both the 1996 and 1997 reports by having a specific section devoted to its activities. The achievements of sports women are celebrated in the 1993 report for the first time and the 1996 Report mentions only women sports achievers (no men!).

The 1997 Report gives an indication of the University's interpretation of employment equity. This is clearly seen from an 'equal opportunities' perspective: "*remove barriers to opportunity*" and "*strategies to enable black people and women to become equal competitors for posts on our establishment*" (Ramphele 1997, p. 45) In 1998 as a first step towards developing the employment equity plan that would be required by the Department of Labour in 2000, an equity audit was embarked upon and a new recruitment and selection policy was adopted to ensure that staff of "*the highest caliber*" are appointed irrespective of gender or race. This was supported by the establishment of the Vice Chancellor's Employment Equity Review Group.

Although Dr Ramphela resigned her position as Vice Chancellor during 1999, by the time she left a number of senior positions in the University were held by women (the Chancellor, the Dean of Students, the Director of Communication, Director of Finance) and the UCT Medal had been awarded to a woman. However none of the academic deans were women, none of the new Distinguished Professors were women and only one of the 6 honorary degrees in 1999 was awarded to a woman. (This same year two of the academic deans were black, three of the honorary graduates were black, as were two of the Distinguished Professors implying either that racial transformation was coming more easily to UCT than gender transformation or providing insight into the relative importance of what the University wished to be seen to be transforming.) Interestingly a graphic of the new academic appointments in the 1999 Report shows a startling decline in the appointment of white males between 1996, when 51% of the new appointments were white men, to 1999 when they only made up 19,5% of the appointments. The major increases are seen to be in black men, and to a lesser extent black women.

Into the new century

With policies now in place the 2000 and 2001 Reports speak in general terms of commitment to these policies. “*UCT continues to work hard to meet its equity targets*” (van Eeden in Ndebele, 2001, p. 48) and “*Equity concerns remain high on the Faculty agenda*” (Pitt in Ndebele, 2001, p. 17). Despite this, from 2001 to 2003 none of the Reports gives any indication of employment equity or transformation forming part of a Deputy Vice Chancellor’s portfolio. When Dr Ramphela was DVC, she was responsible for Equal Opportunity; this was followed by Prof Ncayiyana (a black male) having responsibility for Transformation. From 2001, following his departure, the Reports give no indication as to who now had this responsibility. Even when Associate Professor de la Rey (a black woman) was appointed as Deputy Vice Chancellor, her portfolio was described in the 2002 Report as being ‘research and innovation’, despite the fact that transformation formed an important part of her responsibilities. The 2005 Report once again identifies a Deputy Vice Chancellor to be “*responsible for ensuring the co-ordination of appropriate processes to achieve*

university-wide transformation objectives" (Ndebele, 2005, p. 20), and for the first time this person is a white male¹².

The rhetoric about the need to change the staff profile continues. "*UCT continues to work hard to meet its equity targets*" (Ndebele, 2001, p. 48), and "*UCT has developed a model for changing the academic staff profile...*" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 6). The impression conveyed by the rhetoric over the 15 years (1991-2005) is that UCT is taking the transformation of the composition of its staff very seriously, however there is little evidence provided in the Reports that any progress has been made beyond the very visible changes in the senior leadership. It is only in the last two Reports that there is any suggestion that deep structural factors affecting the institutional climate might need to be addressed: "*We have to provide a more welcoming environment... This environment must also actively work towards the retention of new academics.*" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 5)

Statistics

From the second Report onwards statistics are used to convey gender awareness. Until 1994 (when employment equity became an underlying theme of policy) gender statistics were only given for students. The increase in the numbers of women students coming to UCT was noted with pride. The first year for which gender disaggregated data are given was 1951, when women made up 28.7% of the students (reported in Saunders, 1984). By 2003, this percentage had grown to 49%. These student statistics convey a positive picture of a campus that is increasingly representative of the gender composition of society. In later years this is emphasized by providing statistics of first year entering students. However, gender-based statistics of degrees awarded or the proportions of postgraduate students are not provided. This focus on entering UCT (rather than retention or achievement) is also picked up in the highlighting in recent Reports of the numbers of new academic staff that are women (and black).

¹² It is interesting to speculate whether this is symbolically significant, aimed at sending a message that transformation is not something that only black people and women must be concerned with, but that responsibility lies with the dominant group, white males.

While formal tables of gender statistics are used each year in the Reports to make statements about the student composition of the University, prior to 1994 none of the Reports provided statistics on the racial and gender composition of the UCT staff. The first very broad, gender-disaggregated staff statistics were provided in 1994 showing that 33.8% of academic staff were women. *“Our audit of progress during 1994 showed that 33,8% of the academic staff at UCT are women, but only 10,3% are black. This is an unacceptable situation which we are committed to changing”* (Saunders, 1994, p. 9). It is interesting to note that 11 years later the 2005 Report reveals that the proportion of women academics is much the same at 34%. However by 2005 four of the deans, three of the seven Executive Directors, the Chancellor, and one Deputy Vice Chancellor were women, indicating a commitment to changing high profile positions. The text of the Reports between 1994 and 2005 give isolated statistics that clearly show gender inequity in the staff composition, but no trends are given. In each case the figures are quoted in motivation of action needed, but no subsequent impact of the various interventions that have been detailed in the Reports is provided. Rather one has repeated statements of horror and intent.

Celebrations

To counter the haphazard presentation of staff gender (and racial) statistics over the years, informal statistics can be gleaned from a count of individuals celebrated in the Reports. The individuals celebrated are those that are seen to have contributed to the core activities of the university – teaching and research, The table below summarizes the number and percentage of women celebrated in the Vice Chancellor’s Reports over the 16 years from 1985 that this information was given.

Celebration	No. of women	% of total
Distinguished teachers	12	21,8
New UCT Fellows	3	7,1
Honorary degrees	18	20,4
New professors	4	6,1
Academics singled out for recognition	43	13,4
Total	80	14,0

Table 3. Summary of women celebrated in the Vice Chancellor's Reports between 1985 and 2000.

There has been no noticeable improvement over time in any of these counts. In 2000, none of the distinguished teacher awards went to women and only 1 of the 8 honorary degrees was awarded to a woman. In 2001, 2003 and 2005 no mention is made of any of these awards, but in 2002 again six of seven honorary degrees were awarded to men, and all 7 A-rated researchers celebrated were men. A gender count shows that very few research centres have been headed by women over the years, no women were reported to have exalted research ratings, and by far the majority of research achievements celebrated are those of men. Particularly in the earlier Reports, the award of Honorary Degrees is seen as a major statement by the University – by far the majority of these have been awarded to white males. With even a cursory look at the range of individuals celebrated by the University, it is difficult not to draw the conclusion that women have not really been achieving in the core academic environment of the institution.

Against this continuing theme of celebrating the academic achievement of (mostly) men, isolated events of gender significance and individual women are highlighted. The Centenary of Women at UCT is celebrated, as is the growth in numbers of women students. The Reports mention the formation of the crèche and its formalization into the Educare Centre. Increasingly over the years women are featured in the photographs in the Reports. The appointment in the early 1990s of a woman Deputy Vice Chancellor with responsibility for Equal Opportunity heralded an

increased demonstration of gender awareness, and the Reports celebrate initiatives such as the AGI, Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment policies. In recent years women in senior leadership positions are shown in the Reports (executive directors, deans, the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor). Women and their issues are not ignored. However there are a number of discourses in the Reports that contribute to an 'othering' of women, distancing them from the core academic environment.

One such is the discourse of excellence which is evident in all the Reports. In the early reports this took the form of celebrating linkages with institutions world-wide (despite the isolation of apartheid), in later reports this excellence was celebrated in research achievements, A-rated researchers, the award of centres of excellence and research funds. In both guises this pursuit of excellence was reported as the result of male academic achievement. Women academics are isolated from this achievement and are represented as still needing to be 'developed', a 'critical mass' of them is needed and funds are reported to have been raised for worthy programmes to achieve this. The phrase "*equity and excellence*" used in the Reports reinforces the feeling that usually it is one or the other, so if UCT is excellent, might it have to lower its standards to achieve equity?

Before and after – the impact of a woman in leadership

During Dr Ramphele's nine years as the first (and only) woman in a senior leadership position at UCT she was ideally positioned to bring about gender-based transformation. Her initial tasks were focused on developing equal opportunities and she had a specific interest in gender, as evidenced by her being the Director-designate of the nascent African Gender Institute in 1995. Given that as Vice Chancellor she was a woman in the top leadership position in the University it is accordingly revealing to assess to what degree her leadership brought about an increased awareness of gender, as a specific element of transformation, at UCT. In order to make an assessment of this I have carried out a brief comparative analysis of the treatment of gender in the 1989 Report – the last Report before she became Deputy Vice Chancellor - and the 2003 Report. This latter Report was chosen rather than her last Report (1999) in order to get an impression of the longer term

effectiveness of her interventions as reflected in the Reports. Dr Saunders was the author of the 1989 Report and Professor Ndebele the author of the 2003 Report.

An assessment of the more obvious indicators of gender awareness shows positive change. Only 1 out of 24 photographs in 1989 report show women whereas there are many pictures of women involved in University activities both on the cover and scattered through the 2003 report. The male-dominance of the University in 1989 is also revealed in the celebration of honorary degrees (four of the five are to men), Distinguished Teachers Awards (all three went to men) and the highlighting of the research activities of 32 men and only 2 women. Three specific women are mentioned by name in the 1989 report, as against the mention of nearly 60 men by name (5%). In 2003, 9 women and 30 men are mentioned by name (30%). Gender and related issues (eg employment equity, transformation) are raised twice in the 1989 Report including the statement on gender in the Mission Statement. Transformation and employment equity form a theme of the 2003 Report, and gender/women is specifically referred to 17 times through the report with most faculties specifically commenting with pride on growth in the numbers of women staff and students.

A more in-depth look at the celebration of women's activities in the 2003 report suggests some strain in finding activities to highlight. For example, the (only) two women who are celebrated in the Science Faculty section are both mentioned as receiving or being nominated for women's awards: "... *was one of three senior UCT researchers among four finalists in the Department of Science and Technology's Distinguished Woman Scientist Award..*" and "...*received the 2003 Women in Water Award...*" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 24). The three men reported on did not receive gender-specific awards.

Despite this there has clearly been a change in gender sensitivity over the fourteen years. Environmental factors such as equity legislation and the societal pressure for transformation have obviously played a part. It is difficult to assess to what extent the University was reacting to these external pressures and to what extent the presence of a woman in leadership helped effect change. Many of the equity policies were initiated under her leadership, and these contributed towards the

establishment of units like the AGI and DISCHO. Despite this, in the 2003 Report the Vice Chancellor still clearly indicates the need for improvement, the need to “*create a new generation of young black and female academics*” and the need to “*actively work toward the retention of new academics*” (Ndebele, 2003, p. 5). One cannot avoid making the assessment that, beneath the external window dressing in the Reports, it would seem that the presence of a woman leader has not made a significant impact on the eradication of gender-based power structures governing the core activities of the University. However, evidence from the Reports shows her success in bringing about change in other aspects of transformation. Under her leadership the University has clearly become more corporate, and more aware of the need for efficiency and accountability. These are factors that would have resonated with the rest of the senior leadership. Despite lip-service, one questions whether gender in the patriarchal higher education environment (where we still have Fellows, Master’s and Bachelor’s degrees, a Senate and Deans) continues to be regarded with a mixture of suspicion and discomfort. Possibly the conclusion from this is that, regardless of the seniority or power of the leader, or her commitment to the cause, significant change can only be brought about where those in power surrounding the leader, and who remain after her departure, are also fully on board.

5.8 Summary and Discussion

In this Chapter discourse analysis has been applied to 28 Vice Chancellor’s Reports, covering the period 1977 – 2005. These Reports were written to convey an image of the University both internally and externally. They celebrate achievements, express concerns and articulate visions for the future. As such they also provide a source of qualitative data about the development of the concept of transformation and an approach to assessing what institutional transformation has taken place. This approach goes beyond evaluating statistics and new policies that are often presented as a measure of transformation. The analysis has looked both at what is said and how it is said, and what is not said, and what is conveyed beyond the actual text. An analysis of themes of transformation has attempted to identify areas in which significant organizational change has occurred, impacting the institutional climate as presented in the Vice Chancellor’s Reports. The evolution of the format of

the Reports itself conveys a story of transformation, reflecting the impacts of globalization and corporatization on higher education, and reflecting the pressure to become more accountable to society.

From the very first Report the need for 'change' is noted with the Vice Chancellor suggesting that the University should be responsive to the changing world. The call for change, both in South African society and within the institution develops into a major theme in the Reports over the years, and many intentions and projects to address change are highlighted in the annual Reports. The first use of the word 'transformation' is in 1989 and is applied to the broader South African situation, not the University. Over the years the concept of transformation subsumes talk of change and increasingly forms part of the University's discourse in the Reports. The intense focus on changing South Africa's racial policies during the 1980s turned inward at a relatively early stage to focus on the demography of the student body. Retrospectively in the 1990s these initiatives are referred to as 'transformation' which is described as a "*continuous process of anticipating and addressing future priorities, and doing what we believe is right*" (Saunders, 1994, p. 3). Eleven years later a much more complex perception of transformation is conveyed by the Report: "...*an integrated and multi-faceted endeavour that must necessarily permeate the university, involving all members of our community and underpinning all activities*" (Ndebele, 2005, p. 8). The rhetoric in the Reports now shows a striving for a transformation that is more than a 'process to do what is right'. It is portrayed as an all-consuming, all-involving basis of all the University is doing.

This evolution of the meaning of transformation in the Reports also reveals changes in ownership of the concept. Initially transformation was the initiative (focused on race) of a liberal institution fighting for what it believed was right. With the advent of democracy in South Africa and government requirements for racial transformation, ownership shifted to the State, reducing the University's role to compliance with legislated requirement. However, as the more recent Reports show a deeper interrogation of the meaning of transformation, the institution once again takes ownership, but this time transformation is seen to be the responsibility of each individual in the University.

The themes of transformation portrayed as the most successful in the Reports are those pertaining to efficiency and accountability and the change in the composition of the student body. Both are reported to have had significant resources put toward them, and both clearly had the strong support of the University leadership, and more latterly both have been subjected to external pressure from government. Student statistics are presented in all but the last Report. Although these do not give a breakdown of racial and gender through-put or graduation rates (ie academic success), the transformation of the composition of the student body is clearly celebrated as a success.

The Reports reveal that the racial and gender transformation of the staff has been less successful. This is conveyed in a number of overt and more subtle ways. In the early Reports little profile was given to the demographic make-up of the University staff, however in recent years, despite a vagueness about the use of the term 'black' which was able to disguise considerable racial demographic inequities, staff equity has become a more prominent theme, and the Reports celebrate policies, programmes and funding received to develop black and women staff.

Policies, the most obvious statements of intent, initially cite gender along with race, religion and other potential sources of discrimination. UCT does not wish to be seen to support any form of discrimination, yet, in establishing sexual and racial harassment panels, is admitting to an environment of "*inevitable*" harassment and discrimination. Later the Reports show that policies move away from a frame of discrimination (that which is perpetrated upon a victim) to a perspective of equal opportunity where the institution removes barriers to enable individuals of worth ("*able blacks*" and "*women scholars*") to seize opportunities. The message conveyed is that gender inequalities are no longer structural issues, but rather issues of individual ability. Most recently the policy discourse becomes one of employment equity, where the institution is seen not to be achieving externally imposed numerical targets. This gives rise to a flurry of initiatives that are reported on: equity development programmes, the appointment of employment equity and transformation managers, and the establishment of committees charged with addressing this intractable problem. However, the state-imposed legal definition of disadvantaged groups as pertaining to 'black people, women and people with

disabilities', has created an environment of degrees of disadvantage, and in the historically patriarchal university environment, gender all too easily becomes secondary to race. This is most clearly stated in the 2003 Report where white women are referred to in an almost accusatory tone:

"...an analysis of the 2003 academic staff profile showed that only about 25% of staff who held professor/associate professor positions came from the designated groups, with two thirds of these positions occupied by white women" (Ndebele, 2003, p. 6).

Until the 2005 Report very few staff statistics are provided and information has to be gleaned through indirect means. These show that, despite the development programmes highlighted in the Reports (and whose impact is never commented on in the Reports), with the exception of the leadership cadres there has been little success in changing the racial and gender profile of particularly the academic staff. Implementing policies is made more difficult by the changes brought on by fiscal stringency and calls for rationalization and greater efficiency. Clearly these have gendered impacts on individuals, limiting new appointments and reducing contract staff (who are mainly women).

In the late 1990s the racial and gender discourses have become subsumed in complex, but undefined concepts of transformation and diversity. As the rhetoric of transformation develops, the focus is increasingly on race. The bracketing of race and gender forms an interesting discourse in the Reports. Both are clearly seen as 'the other' and potentially having members who would enrich the institution – 'talented blacks', 'able blacks' and 'women scholars'. Policies which allowed the dominant group to choose either 'black and/or women' could result in a celebration of achievement even if only half the challenge had been met. Within the context of the international condemnation of apartheid race was often chosen as the discrimination most politic to deal with. Speeches are made, protests held, funds raised to overcome apartheid. The dissolution of gender into the 'designated groups' increases this vanishing. Components of the designated groups lose their individual identities and become 'the other'. The analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports suggests that in UCT that 'other' becomes black people. Gender does not receive the same degree of intense focus in the articulated leadership priorities. The Reports convey the impression of a hierarchy of discriminations. Race is presented

as a more pressing priority and the Reports suggest that if discriminatory practices are removed, talented black (men) will be able to populate the institution. There is a feeling that if (white) women are not making it, there must be a reason and that reason resides in the woman herself, something highlighted by showcasing those women who have made it. This highlighting of the achievements of individual women in the more recent Reports in some senses serves to separate them from the mass of other women.

The analysis of the Reports provides insight into the leadership's response to the changing environment within which the University is seeking to survive and prosper. The early Reports present the University as a leader in the fight against apartheid. The later Reports show the University striving to become a microcosm of a transformed South Africa. The use of a gendered lens in performing this analysis of the Reports shows that although there has been a growing appreciation of the need to convey gender sensitivity, analysis of the discourse indicates very little actual change. The awareness that women should be seen as part of this transformed University has not translated into changes in the gendered climate of the institution or recognition that this is a pre-requisite to genuine transformation.

There has clearly been an evolving understanding of transformation over the years covered by the Reports. There have also been many changes in the organization. However, while the overt patriarchal, colonial edifice of the institution has mellowed, and the influence of globalization pressures on the institution can clearly be detected, there is strong evidence that certain things have not changed. Racial and gender statistics can be interpreted positively (especially with respect to students) and there have been many new policies, committees and units. But both the rhetoric and statistics in the recent Reports show that much still needs to be done and point to a focus on the culture of the institution. In the next Chapters I look at selected initiatives in which women have challenged these power relationships to bring about change. Their individual experiences provide a complementary perspective to the leadership discourse on the institutional culture and the imperatives for and processes of change.

CHAPTER 6

6. THE EDUCARE CENTRE

...[W]hen I went to Cambridge I was astonished that they had nothing like that, and I thought, it didn't occur to me by that stage that a large education institution in the first world country that is supposed to be, you know, so liberal and progressive shouldn't have done something like that. They had nothing. I don't know if they have now even. So I was a bit astonished actually and it made me realize that this had been a decent achievement.

(Prof Jennings)

6.1 Introduction

Transformation is a complex concept comprising many variables and a multitude of perspectives. The analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports in the previous Chapter indicates some of the difficulty the University leadership has encountered in attempting to address transformation issues. In my research I am focusing on one component of transformation, gender-based change. In this Chapter I introduce the first of my embedded studies looking at initiatives that impact women's career development in higher education, the UCT Educare Centre. In my study of the Educare Centre I attempt to map the gendered culture of the University prior to analyzing the dynamics of change in this complex environment.

As discussed in Chapter 3, across the world the proportion of women in higher education decreases with increasing seniority of position. Researchers have explored many reasons for this decrease with increasing rank. A number of these relate to the reality that society requires women to take the greater responsibility for the family, with childcare being one of the most intensive pressures during the earlier part of a woman's career. Wilson (2003) reports on a study undertaken in the United States which shows that women who have babies within 5 years of obtaining their PhDs are 30% less likely to get permanent university positions. Despite the increase in feminist awareness over the past 30 years, Rao and Kelleher still in 2003, (p. 142) identify the devaluing of reproductive labour as "*the most fundamental*" among what they describe as "*the rules that maintain women's positions in societies*". In the

university environment at a time when male colleagues are taking up post-doctoral positions overseas, many young women are tied to the home bringing up small children. When male colleagues start building professional networks at international conferences, young mothers are rushing home to bath and feed the family. These family responsibilities limit a young woman's career development options by reducing her mobility and visibility and they also serve to position her as 'the other' in the patriarchal higher education environment.

An initiative to establish child care facilities is a basic step towards facilitating greater participation of young women in academia. It requires the political will on the part of the establishment to accept the participation of young women with parenting responsibilities into the academic life of the institution. Beyond this it also has the potential to challenge the patriarchal culture of higher education. It requires a change in the way reproductive labour is viewed by the institution and speaks of a need to get the institution to acknowledge child care as a valid zone of labour. Thus, beyond being seen as providing assistance to individual women, this initiative has the potential to bring about gender based-transformation in the culture of the institution by formally engaging with the gendered division of labour and its repercussions in the academic environment.

The initiatives around providing child care at the University have been ongoing for over 30 years. Thus as my first study, looking at the Educare Centre provides an historical perspective on the process of bringing about gendered change and an opportunity to assess longer term impacts on the gendered culture of the institution. It is not my intent to create a history of the Educare Centre, but to draw on memories and documents which are embedded in time to illuminate critical threads of the gendered institutional culture. The analysis of the data on the Educare Centre covers two Chapters. In this, the first, I start with a discussion on the approach used in selecting and analyzing the data. This is followed by a short outline of the Centre to provide a context for the more detailed analyses of the interview transcripts and University documentation. As I believe that the interpretation of the concepts I am working with (the university, transformation, gender, institutional culture) is closely related to positionality in this Chapter, I use an analysis of the interviews to introduce each of my selected participants. I highlight their relationship to the Educare Center

and their understanding of gender in the work environment. These introductions comprise the bulk of this Chapter and add richness to the subsequent thematic analyses which are described in the next Chapter which focuses on the institutionalization of the Educare Centre.

6.2 Rationale and Data

Two main sources of data are used to explore the establishment of the Educare Centre as an example of gendered change: documentation from the University Archives and semi-structured interviews with people involved with the Educare facility over the years. The documentation is useful in providing an indication of the institutionalization of the quest for child care. It also provides a corroborative framework and background to the memories of people involved in its development and gives additional insight into the institutional reaction to this initiative. The interviews give personal perspectives of the process and dynamics of institutionalization and are a rich source of data on the culture of the institution.

As the focus of my research is on bringing about change in the institution and not specifically on the history of the Educare Centre, my selection of documentation was based primarily on its potential as an indicator of institutional transformation. The main sources of documentation accessed were those formally housed in the University Archives. These comprise the early files from the University Administration starting in 1977 and going up to 1998 and include letters, memoranda, reports to Council and some minutes of meetings between the University authorities and various crèche committees. The archived minutes of University Council meetings and current promotional material on the UCT web page were also accessed. Revealingly the minutes of the Educare Management and Educare Advisory committees are not formally lodged in the University Archives suggesting a distancing of the Centre from the formal structure of the institution. I have not attempted to trace these Educare minutes and have limited my sources to centrally maintained documents.

Transformation requires profound change and this is perceived deeply personally by individuals from different perspectives. It is my contention that an analysis of the narrated experiences of carefully selected individuals will enable me to construct a matrix of facts, attitudes, and perceptions around which I will be able to build up a picture of the gendered culture of the institution and map any changes. Participants were purposefully selected to be people closely involved with the Educare Centre and to allow overlapping triangulations covering different periods in its history, differing relationships to the Centre, and a range of positions in the hierarchy of the University.

Participants have been given pseudonyms which give an impression of their hierarchical position and their cultural background. As a postgraduate student Prof Jennings was involved in the early establishment of the Educare Centre as a parent. She is currently a senior academic. Ms Hendricks is the current coordinator of the Center. George is a member of the administrative and support staff of the University and a line manager of the coordinator. Mr Russell is a senior administrator in the institution with an early involvement in the institutionalizing of the centre and was also a consumer parent of the Centre. Dr Jones is an academic who has recently completed her PhD and is a current and past consumer parent. She has served on the Educare Centre's committees. The coordinator and her line manager were selected on the basis of their official positions. In selecting participant Prof Jennings I used prior knowledge of her early involvement, taking advantage of her visiting the University at the time of the interview. Fortuitously she also turned out to be a close friend of the women recognized to be responsible for securing permanent accommodation for the Centre, giving me additional insights around this that would otherwise have been very difficult to obtain as, like Prof Jennings, this person now resides in Europe. Mr Russell and Dr Jones were interviewed as a consequence of recommendations in the earlier interviews. Three of the participants were known previously to me and we have all been in the institution for a similar length of time. I met Ms Hendricks and Dr Jones at the time of the interview.

In the matrix below I summarize the differing intersecting perspectives of the five participants. Their combined input covers three decades, with Prof Jennings being one of the original postgraduate student activists calling for child care. Apart from

Prof Jennings, all of the participants are still currently employed by the University and all of them have had ten or more years interaction with the Educare Centre. The range of participants includes staff from the academic and administrative sectors in the institution and at differing hierarchical levels. The student/staff divide is spanned in the persons of Prof Jennings and Dr Jones as their first interactions with the Educare Centre occurred when they were postgraduate students. The selection of the participants also includes the perspectives of both consumer parents (male and female) and non-users of the facility. (In the table below m and f indicate male and female).

Perspectives	EC1f	EC2f	EC3m	EC4m	EC5f
Pseudonym	Prof Jennings	Ms Hendricks	George	Mr Russell	Dr Jones
1980s	x			x	
1990s		x	x	x	x
2000s		x	x		x
Academic	x				x
Support/Administrative		x	x	x	
Senior position	x			x	
Middle management		x	x		x
Postgraduate Student	x				x
Parent consumer	x			x	x
Non consumer		x	x		
White ¹³	x		x	x	x

Table 4. Mapping of the different intersecting perspectives of the participants

The interviews with these five participants covered a spectrum of positions and provided rich data for both depth and thematic analyses. Accordingly, used in conjunction with the data from the archived documents, interviews with these five

¹³ As race is an integral component of all interactions in South Africa and a key focus of transformation I believe it is valuable to indicate whether the participants belong to the apartheid-privileged white race group or not.

purposively selected participants was felt to provide the range and depth of information required for this research.

In designing the semi-structured interviews I encouraged the participants to speak about their involvement in or knowledge about the establishment of the Educare Centre, its integration into the institution and their perspectives of its impact. Acknowledging the need for carefully planning semi-structured interviews as emphasized by Wengraf (2001), I designed a set of questions focusing on these topics to provide a guide for the discussion. (The basic interview schedule is attached in Appendix 3.) Prior to each interview I minimally adjusted the questions to take account of my prior understanding of the individual's relationship to the Centre. In most cases the questions served to introduce topics and stimulate response rather than request specific answers. At the end of each interview the participant was invited to add whatever he or she felt might be of additional interest. All of the interviews were conducted in the participant's office and permission was requested from all participants to tape the interviews which would remain confidential. It is understood that several of the participants could however be recognized by virtue of their positions.

I transcribed the interview tapes using NVivo software as a tool to assist with coding, and three different analyses were conducted on the data. The first treated each interview as a depth interview (Wengraf, 2001) and analysis of the discourse was used to yield information about the self-positioning of the participant with respect to the University and the Educare Centre. The discourse analysis also focused on illuminating participants' overt and covert representations of 'gender' and their perceptions as gendered individuals. Secondly an analysis was carried out to identify themes across the interviews relating to illumination of the dynamics of change. Following the grounded theory tradition formulated by Glaser and Strauss the themes are identified from the data and lead to higher level analytic lenses. An analysis of the participants' perspectives of the impact of the initiative gives an indication of its perceived success in bringing about gender-based change in the University.

the appointment of 17 junior academics with high potential who are black and/or women South Africans to “supernumery” contract posts. These contract posts have been created in addition to our staff establishment to offer opportunities for additional experience and qualifications and to enable incumbents to demonstrate their ability, so that they can compete successfully for permanent posts as they become vacant. (Ramphela, 1997, p. 45).

Subsequent Reports do not comment on the success or otherwise of these strategies suggesting either a lack of diligence in evaluation or that these programmes have had little impact on the composition of the academic staff. Despite this, external funding continues to contribute towards employment equity initiatives in the Faculties and the 2005 report celebrates funding being raised from four major donors for this.

In the 1998 Report Dr Ramphela bemoans the fact that *“We still have a long way to go in transforming our staff profile so that we draw on the widest pool of available talent – a prerequisite for real excellence.”* (p. 3) thereby bringing in a new rationale for changing the demographic composition of the staff. The 1998 Report also tells of the establishment of the Joint Consultative Forum on Employment Equity which *“has embarked on an equity audit”* of *“the designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities) as specified by the Employment Equity Act”* (Ramphela, 1998, p. 21), clearly showing the broader environmental influence on the University. New recruitment and selection policies are also celebrated that *“will serve as a code of good practice so that staff of the highest caliber are recruited; and black people women and people with disabilities come to be equitably represented on UCT’s staff.”* (Ramphela, 1998, p. 21). This latter quote shows the convergence of the rhetoric of excellence and designated groups taking place in the late 1990’s.

By 1999, the Report shows the racial profile of the University leadership to have undergone significant ‘transformation’, and this is emphasized by the full colour pictures of the leadership (44% of the leadership can be seen to be black). Attention to the racial composition of these high profile positions did not however seem to have affected the academic core of the institution. The Report indicates that only 11% of the academic staff were black in 1999 (and here black is taken to be all who are not “white”). It is significant to note that this is only an increase of less than 1%

over the statistics quoted in the 1994 Report, despite the equity initiatives described in previous Reports. However a table in the most recent 2005 Report details improvements in employment equity statistics and black people are now shown to be making up 22% of the academic staff, and heading for a target of 27% in 2007.

Reconciliation

The concept of racial reconciliation first makes its appearance in the 2000 Report in which the (black) Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences tells of the multi-pronged approach his Faculty was taking to transformation. This included the appointment of a Transformation Officer, implementing employment equity strategies, and working on institutional culture and institutional reconciliation. This concept of reconciliation is followed up in the two subsequent reports which describe the development of a “Reconciliation Process” in the Faculty. This is described in the 2002 Report as:

...a ten-month process of self-introspection, examining discriminatory acts towards black students and staff as well as acts of resistance to legalized discrimination during its long history. Through this process of introspection the Faculty genuinely acknowledged its history, both in allowing acts of discrimination and oppression as well as in its active opposition to apartheid and the abuse of human rights. (Ndebele, 2002, p. 7).

Prof Ndebele goes on to comment:

However much work remains to be done, not only in the Health Science Faculty, but within the entire University. The process is a critical one for UCT to reflect on in its quest for a transformed institutional culture. No faculty or department should remain aloof from the implications of truth and reconciliation. (Ndebele, 2002, p. 7)

In the 2005 Report the word ‘reconciliation’ is replaced by “*improving understanding and relationships*” (p. 9) and the Vice Chancellor writes that “*A great deal of attention was paid to transformation at the level of social relationships at UCT.*” (Ndebele, p. 9).

Race as a component of ‘the other’

In the final two Reports studied (2003, 2005) racial issues are subsumed into the now further developed concept of Transformation: “*We should therefore view the*

Thus in my analyses of the documents and interviews I am able to integrate a number of different genres of data. Firstly it is essential to acknowledge my prior (but limited) knowledge of the institution, including my varied familiarity with, and sometimes in-depth knowledge of many of the people and structures spoken about. It is worth noting that despite my prior institutional knowledge it is significant that in my 40 years as a woman student and staff member, and a parent, I only learned about the Educare Centre some six years ago when a young colleague of mine spoke of her baby being there. My familiarity with the environment being studied played out in different ways with the different interviews, facilitating the interviews with Prof Jennings and Mr Russell both of whom I had known for a long time and to whom I did not appear to be any threat. George, whom I had also known for a long time, gave an impression of presenting a façade to me because he felt I expected it, thus giving an impression of being somewhat threatened by my research. Dr Jones whom I had not met previously was not easy to interview giving guarded answers to questions and presenting herself as primarily an academic rather than a mother. I subsequently heard her giving a short talk on the history of the Educare Centre at its 25th Anniversary Party, on which occasion she spoke with much greater ease about her relationship to the Centre to the audience of past and present parents. Ms Hendricks, whom I had not met before either, appeared to be delighted that someone from the University was interested in the Educare Centre and her work.

The facts about the Centre and its history comprise a second data genre. These come from both the documentation and the interviews and enable me to provide a factual outline of the Centre as background to the analyses. Facts also provide a datum to the individual's memories. Some of the facts are also key indicators of institutionalization. Significant among these are Council decisions pertaining to the relevance of the Educare Centre to the University at different times; the provision by the University of premises, first temporary accommodation and, most significantly, the purpose-built premises on the campus; the establishment of formal committees to run the Centre; the creation of the permanent staffing positions in the Centre on University conditions of employment; and the absorption of the Educare Budget into the Properties and Services budget, thus removing it from the attention of the University Budget Committee.

Thirdly, and most important, as transformation is so subjective (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5), the interviews also provide data on the perceptions and attitudes of the different people interviewed. The subjectivity and politics of each participant play out during the interview process and I attempt to expose this both in the analysis of each participant's positioning relative to my study and as I track the process of change as perceived by those involved, seeing the institution through their eyes. Common, complementary and contrasting perceptions contribute towards the web of realities and illusions that become the institution's culture. In addition to extracting this overt subjectivity, I use some of the tools of discourse analysis to expose unexpressed attitudes and positions as the participants describe their interactions with the Educare Centre and the University.

6.3 The Educare Centre

Currently UCT is one of three South African Universities that provide on-campus childcare support to staff and students. The promotional material on the UCT Web page indicates that the UCT Educare Centre currently accommodates 70 children from the ages of 3 months to 6 years, in 5 classes, and has a staff of 9 people. The web page states that the Centre is a "*microcosm of UCT*" whose "*effective operation frees staff and students to teach and study, and its demography reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity on our campus*" (<http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/educare/> accessed 30 August 2005). In highlighting this diversity here the Centre appears to be presenting itself as a model of institutional transformation.

In 2006 this microcosm translated into a racial mix of 43% of the children being white, 24% being African with the remaining 33% including coloured and Asian children. As many as 18 of the children are of non-South African parentage. The Educare Centre currently has a total of 78 children registered, with 15 of these being considered as 'private' children, that is, they do not have parents currently working at UCT. 41 of the children have staff parents and 22 have parents who are students. An estimate suggests that fewer than 10% of the children come from the lowest pay

classes¹⁴ where most women are located. (Personal communication: Data supplied by Educare coordinator, 17 October, 2006)

In this section I provide a brief sketch outlining some of the steps in the establishment of Educare Centre as gleaned from University documents housed in the University Archives. The purpose of presenting this brief chronological outline of the establishment of the Centre is to give a context for the analysis which follows. (No attempt is made to provide details of the curriculum of the Centre or its daily operation as I take this to be peripheral to my study of its integration into the University). The analyses in Chapter 7 use a more detailed look at the archived documents from which this brief version of the history of the Centre has been drawn and the documents are referenced in detail at that time. (The list of the documents used to compile the brief chronology and which are referenced in Chapter 7 is given in Appendix 2.) In Chapter 7 the specific extracts from the documents are integrated with the data from the depth interviews, providing additional perspectives and allowing a more nuanced version of the establishment of the Educare Centre to emerge.

University Council minutes show that from the early 1970s a small group of women postgraduate students had been agitating for crèche facilities on campus. In February 1974 the Council approved the idea in principle, but government requirements pertaining to such facilities were so onerous¹⁵ that it was only in 1982 that the University officially accepted the makeshift crèche that the students had started in 1978, providing it with a small subsidy and accommodation in La Grotta, a house belonging to the University and adjacent to the campus. At this stage the facility cared for some 33 children. Council documents show that in 1987 an inspection from the government department of Health Services and Welfare condemned the facilities and threatened to close the Educare Centre as it did not comply with the legislated space and health requirements. This stimulated considerable debate and advocacy, and in 1988 the University Council accepted that

¹⁴ University administrative and professional staff salaries are grouped into ranges, termed 'pay classes'. The highest pay classes (13 – 15) pertain to Executives and Directors. Most administrative staff fall within pay classes 6 – 12. Over the last 10 years many of positions falling within the lowest pay classes (5 and below) have been outsourced by the University.

¹⁵ Detail of these requirements is provided in Chapter 7 in the section on "Growing consciousness".

the Educare Centre which was then accommodating 43 children should be a permanent part of UCT and agreed to provide a subsidy of R18000 per annum. A more suitable site for the Centre which complied with government regulations was sought, and a funding arrangement was structured by the Registrar to cover the building costs. The capital costs were covered by an internal University loan which was to be repaid by the Educare Centre, with a subsidy, over a period of time. The Centre moved into its new premises at the beginning of 1989. It is interesting to note that it was extremely difficult to find formal confirmation of this significant date as the files pertaining to that period and the early 1990s were dominated by problems pertaining to the performance of individual staff members and internal restructuring to make better use of staff time¹⁶. Initial informal Educare committees were then officially established by the University administration under the leadership of the Registrar and integrated into University structures: a Management Committee of parents and teachers was formalized in 1988, and an Advisory Committee, a committee of Council, which eventually became operational in 1992. This comprised people not necessarily associated with the Educare Centre who were appointed to serve on it by the University Nominations Committee.

A full-time post of coordinator of the Educare Centre was established in the Buildings and Services Department in 1991. At that time the position was at a level similar to that of a senior secretary and there was considerable motivation to upgrade it. All during its history the cost of operating the Educare Centre has been a major issue of contention within the debates of the University Budget Committee and the Council. This led to an unsuccessful attempt by individuals within the institution to outsource the service in 1995 and a further investigation into possible outsourcing was conducted by the University in 2000 as part of the AIMS (Audit and Integration of Management Systems) project. This recommended that the Educare facility, which was then accommodating 81 children, remain an in-house operation but that it should make every attempt to become more self-sufficient. The Educare budget was integrated into the Properties and Services budget in the mid 1990s. In 2005 the Educare Centre had a budget of R888 549, some 0.09 % of the total University

¹⁶ These internal management issues are not pursued in the subsequent analyses as they are not considered relevant to this research, having minimal impact on the Centre's integration into the fabric of the University.

budget. The Centre serves a population of some 22 000 students and 2 500 staff, approximately 50% of which are women.

6.4 The Participants

In this section I purposively examine the data I obtained in each interview to give an insight into each participant's relationship to University and his or her personal chronology in relation to the Educare Centre. Further analysis within the context of the participants' competing positions as University employees and parents is used to expose each person's different perspective on gender realities and dynamics and how he or she engages with the gendered culture of the institution. This focused analysis of each participant's positioning relative to my study is presented separately allowing the different characters and perspectives to emerge. This approach recognizes the importance of positionality in the use of interview data and provides the context to the analyses of institutional culture and change dynamics carried out in Chapter 7.

The analyses below are presented not in the order in which the interviews were conducted, but in approximate chronological order of the participants' prime involvement with the Educare Centre to better contextualize their positioning with respect to the development of the facility.

6.4.1 Professor Jennings.

Professor Jennings is one of a number of women currently in senior academic positions who were involved in the early establishment of crèche facilities at the University. Professor Jennings has spent most of her academic life at UCT, only recently leaving for a prestigious post in Europe. Her three children attended the University's child care facilities at different times during the 1970s and 1980s, in the makeshift crèche in the Students' Union, and when it was housed in La Grotta. I have known Prof Jennings for many years as a distant colleague with our main

overlapping area of interest being the promotion of women in science. She was an active member of the early crèche parents committee and, although she admits that *"my memory that far back is quite hazy"*, it was useful to explore her recollection of the 1980s. Her memories encompass both her own involvement in the crèche and feedback on the interactions with the University administration that she had from her close friend, a colleague who was the key activist associated with locating the permanent premises for the Educare Centre, a woman who left South Africa many years ago.

Looking back at her first involvement with the early crèche, Prof Jennings describes herself as a senior student, but makes it clear that she had previously been a member of the University staff who had decided to further her career by resigning and undertaking postgraduate studies. During her studies she had a second child and had a period where she *"kind of doubled things for a bit as a student and as a mother, but you know eventually, the limitations..."* At this time she encountered *"a small group of people who were mature students who had children"* who set up a *"kind of communal baby-sitting service"* in the Student's Union. She described this as arising from: *".. a kind of pure desperation really"* and *"just you know something we had to do."*

The dual role of mother and student drove her and the others to take the initiative to push for child care. They wanted their children nearby and in a facility over which they had some control, and which was affordable. She articulates the guilt that plagues working mothers and their need to feel that they are accessible to their children:

...you know that makes you feel a little bit better about leaving your kids.... It means that you can be called and that you are quite near by if anything should go wrong and so on.

She is absolutely clear about the impact of having an educare facility on young career women:

I think it was a hellava struggle and um, I always thought the fees were quite high, but we managed to pay them by hook or by crook I dunno how. Um but it, I think it, having your kids close by when you are um studying and you know doing something that is quite a frenetic activity as doing your PhD or first job or whatever, I think was an incredible help.

In talking about the actions undertaken during the early days Prof Jennings always refers to “people” doing things, rather than “women” and, although she refers to “dads”, when questioned about this she admits that she cannot actually remember any men being involved. She recognizes that what they were pushing for would benefit women and mothers, but does not specifically highlight women as being what she describes as the ‘activists’. She also includes herself very much as part of the group involved in the crèche facility set up in the Students’ Union and talks throughout the interview of “we” driving the initiative. It is interesting to note that during the interview she only uses the word “mother” once, applying it to her situation “as a student and as a mother”, and she speaks of ‘parents’ being involved and impacted. It is almost as if “mother” is not part of her vocabulary when talking about her career or place of work.

She describes the interactions in the early 1980s around the establishment of a crèche as taking place with “the University”, only in three instances mentioning specific sectors of the institution, and in all cases these references are either vague (“I think that there was some representatives who had to sit on some committee” and “properties and services or whatever they call themselves” or incorrect (referring to “Senate” instead of Council). She describes a University that is monolithic, unsympathetic and uncooperative, more interested in property and money than enabling the careers of students and staff.

Included in the fees was paying back the building. So they actually had to pay for the space and the building. Um so that the the fees were subsidizing a building on campus.

It is almost as if she is distancing herself from the institution and she gives the impression of not being in the slightest interested in University structures or bureaucracy:

I do remember I think that there was some representatives who had to sit on some committee and you know in the main admin building, and I can't remember what it was.

In contrast to her personal conviction about the value of the Educare Centre, Prof Jennings presents herself as currently being distant from the Centre saying : “I really haven't heard much about the Educare for a long time.” Although she does not

specifically define it as such, in her recollections she clearly demonstrates a feminist perspective that women should not be penalized in their careers because of their multiple roles in society. The students were portrayed as being driven by the impossibility of their dual role as parents and postgraduates, motivating an oblivious institution to provide assistance for them as parents, stretching the University beyond the normal definition of the academic agenda. She uses hyperbole to emphasize her points. A proposed site for the Centre is rejected by the University because "*it would cost billions*" and "*to get a foreign concept accepted into University takes about 100 years*". In looking back she suggests that the young parents might have been "*more militant*" but she shows pride in what they had achieved describing it as "*a decent achievement*" and "*a good achievement*" - understatements that are interesting to contrast with the hyperbole she uses to describe the University.

6.4.2 Mr Russell

Mr Russell has been a senior member of the Administration of the University for thirty years and a colleague with whom I have had professional contact for many of those years. He was enthusiastic about participating in a discussion on the Educare Centre and appeared to thoroughly enjoy recalling its history. He scattered personal anecdotes about individuals from the past throughout the interview, many of which seemed to amuse him greatly as he described them to me. Despite this he appears keen to distance himself from the Centre at the present time. In the first quote below he uses very strong language to convey a separation and in the second quote suggests that although he had an interest in the past, this does not continue presently.

I am totally removed and remote from the Educare Centre now

It used to be in the HR staff manual, but whether it is now, I don't know.

In the discussions he positions himself as an historian, attempting to be precise about dates and individuals, and he lets me know that he has made an effort to prepare for the interview by requesting historical files on the Educare Centre:

I haven't had a chance to go through these files, they only arrived here last night.

His reference to files speaks to his positioning the Centre as part of the institution and institutional record. It also speaks of his commitment to the discussion in that he made the effort to locate the files.

In contrast to his concern for accuracy related to historical events associated with the establishment of the Centre, he is vague about his personal involvement during the early days – despite providing a specific date.

.. I was involved in the early stages in 1982 when in, I suppose, I I must have become involved initially as Academic Planning Officer.

And when questioned whether he had served on the Educare Advisory Committee again he responds vaguely:

No, no. Well I may have been at some stage, but I wasn't at this stage.

However, prior to becoming what he describes as 'consumer' of the Educare Centre, he did see himself as a "champion" of the Centre and its "advocate" and as such he clearly recognized the power of his position.

Well, ur, ur, well first of all, the embarrassing situation is I became a consumer! in 1995. [Did that give you a different perspective?] Well it, um, I then had to withdraw as a champion of it, Cause I mean I then couldn't.. [Did you see it as a conflict of interests?] Yes. Oh very much so. [If you were a consumer?] I couldn't be its advocate, internally. I could have been an advocate if I hadn't been in a position of course of influence.

His separation of the roles and responsibilities of "champion" and "consumer" suggests a compartmentalization that contrasts the feminist integration of the public and the private that formed the core of the early activism around the Centre. Mr Russell's ethics required him to "withdraw as champion" as he did not want his advocacy for the centre to be seen to be motivated by or resulting in personal benefit. He recognizes that he is in a position of power, power which he is paid to wield on a daily basis to benefit the University, but he is not prepared to wield his power for something that could be interpreted as benefiting his family. This ethical position suggests a culture in which the private and the public good are very sharply separated and which removes those most intimately impacted by change from participating in the process of change. Change is then reduced to a management

process. Mr Russell's stature, position and influence in the organization suggests that this is a perspective of change that is favoured by the institution.

Prior to becoming a "*consumer*" he admits to using his not-inconsiderable influence on people such as the Vice Chancellor, not only succeeding in persuading him about the need for child care, but also ensuring that the Vice Chancellor actively argued for it. There is no doubt that in the early days Mr Russell's wielding of power at a senior level had a significant impact, countering those who saw the Centre primarily as a drain on University resources. He describes himself as doing "*the internal negotiation*" around the provision of resources for the new building and being "*left arguing for [the Centre]*". Twice he refers to the fact that he was interviewed by a women's magazine about the Centre in the late 1980s, resulting in an article which he agreed had given the University "*brownie points*" from other organizations. In drawing attention to the fact that he was interviewed he is letting me know that he was acknowledged to have played a central role in the establishment of the Centre.

Mr Russell is keenly aware of the significance of the provision of child care as a women's issue. In his interview he mentions "*women*" in general 12 times and recalls the actions of a number of specific women. One of these, the woman who had been the key motivator for the current Educare premises on campus he suggests had the potential to become a vice chancellor had she not left the country. In mentioning this he is allowing himself to be seen as open to the concept of women vice chancellors and suggests that he appreciates the synergy between the provision of child care and facilitating women's career development.

MN was the driving force, I mean, its her monument. Um she's now living in some place in [Europe]It's a real tragedy because, she could have been, a woman vice chancellor.

Mr Russell also let me know of his personal appreciation of the positive effect on working women of the provision of the child care facilities by describing how the Educare Centre affected his working wife:

[My wife] who was then working in town, dropped her here, drove into town, worked for 3 hours, came back and picked her up, so you know it was ab-so-lutely perfect ur situation.

He talks a lot of his involvement as a parent giving detailed descriptions of his daughter's five years at the Centre which he describes as "*fantastic*". He is particularly enthusiastic about the multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-national mix amongst the children at the centre mentioning specific nationalities, races and language groups, and the positive impact that this had on the children. As a 'consumer' his experience has been very positive but he lets me know that he feels that the University has missed an opportunity by not making more of the Centre. He talks about making the "*statement of having an Educare Centre*" showing that he recognizes the need for the University to be expressing awareness of the issues faced by its working women.

Mr Russell clearly positions himself as an integral part of the University which he views as a heterogeneous grouping of individuals and committees. He sees himself as using his influence to direct these, and in talking about the establishment of the Educare Centre he describes himself as a change agent, a role from which he seems to have been distanced in more recent times. He lets me know that he sympathizes with the past feminist activity on campus and that he appreciates the pressures on working mothers. However he does not allow this to compromise his ethical stance which separates his public and private personae.

He presents himself as having been deeply involved in the Educare Centre (as a champion and a parent) and yet distances himself from it today. In the past while debates raged about its existence stimulated by its perceived cost to the institution, from his position of power as a senior administrator he went about embedding it into institutional structures. He ensured that formal committee structures were set up to manage the Centre, files were kept, and a financial model was established. He describes himself as having been personally responsible for this administrative institutionalization, but makes it clear that these days he has no say in how it is managed or marketed.

Mr Russell, who had been such a powerful advocate for the Educare Centre in the early days gives no impression of using his influence to assist the Centre today. This stand-back attitude is thrown into sharp focus in contrasting his reflection on his interaction with a past Vice Chancellor and the present Vice Chancellor:

So I was left arguing for this, and I made sure that the VC did as well
referring to the 1980s, and referring to the current situation:

You know I, I don't know whether the VC knows of its existence.

In the past Mr Russell influenced Vice Chancellors, today he is uncertain what they know. The interview gave the impression that to Mr Russell the University of the past was a more dynamic institution than that of today. In the past he was a participant in lively debate and change whereas today he takes on the role of observer, the historian.

6.4.3 Dr Jones

I had not met Dr Jones prior to the interview and in introducing herself to me at the start of the interview she is careful to establish her academic credibility, positioning herself as an academic, making her seniority known, and emphasizing that she undertakes research – a critical requirement for being accepted into the serious academic environment at the University.

*I'm a senior lecturer in the Department of XX um at the moment my,
this particular year I am doing research more than teaching.*

Dr Jones did not show much interest in the early history of the Educare Centre claiming to have “*sort of read the history*” in a pamphlet. During the interview she relates her interaction with the Educare Centre to stages in her career. She first encountered the Centre when she obtained a full-time job at the University, then after her two older children had left, returned some 10 years later at a time when she describes herself as having “*far more responsibilities at work than when I was a younger mum*”. At this stage it was a “*godsend*”, enabling her to complete her PhD.

[Q]uite honestly if I hadn't had the Educare Centre I doubt that I would have finished the PhD.

The Educare Centre enabled her to “*guarantee those hours at work*”.

In contrast to her clear delineation of her professional position, she gives a more obscure description of her first contact with the Educare Centre, downplaying her involvement.

My children started there, it would have been '93. Um, I have one of sort of just, no she was just, almost a year and then one of 3 who started there um and ja my involvement was really just as a parent and perhaps as a class rep, that sort of thing.

In the next sentence she provides a somewhat different timing for her first involvement, suggesting that it took place when her baby was newborn, and she had just been appointed to the full time staff in the department. She gives no suggestion that her involvement became more intense until specifically questioned about her participation on the Educare committees. From this it emerged that after a year she was serving on the Management Committee and once her children had left she served on the Educare Advisory Committee. When I push her further she admits to an even more committed level of involvement.

Interviewer: "So you were just on [the Advisory Committee]?"

Dr Jones: "I chaired that Committee for a couple of years and so I mean my involvement went on long after my children had left."

Much later in the interview she admits that she spent considerable time on Educare Committee work but says that it was "worth it". She explains this and sees the need to provide a justification for her commitment to the Centre when she tells for the first time more than half way through the interview of one of her children's handicap and the assistance provided to her by the Educare staff. It is almost as if she is letting me know that it was her exceptional circumstances that got her involved in this 'woman's issue'.

Interviewer: "So then you in a sense stand out, you and others who served on the Committees as being exceptional? Putting the extra time in?"

Dr Jones: "Probably er, a little, and maybe it was because of my early experiences with D. being handicapped and getting a lot of support [yes, okay]. Ja, and I felt quite strongly about the place."

Her focusing the discussion on the Educare Centre around her career development combined with this initial reluctance to talk about her involvement in the Educare Centre suggests that she feels that it is in some way inappropriate for her now, as a serious academic, to admit to these other gender-linked involvements. However she then somewhat embarrassedly lets me know that her connection with the Educare Centre carried on for even longer when an unexpected third child threatened to interrupt her career plans:

And then, gosh in 2002, I had a laat-lammetjie¹⁷, any way it was a big surprise [and..] so I rushed up to the Educare Centre again [laughter] and said I need help cause I was doing my PhD.

It is interesting to note how this embarrassment echoes that of Mr Russell when he too admits to becoming a consumer of the Centre. The way these participants convey their parenthood to me suggests a need to imply that having children might not be considered a valid activity for employees of the institution.

Whilst clearly wanting to be seen as a researcher embedded in an academic department, in the past when actively involved with the Educare Centre she had experienced the institution as hostile. She describes her time on the Committees as “a struggle” with the institution “just whittling away at what we had established”. Currently she finds that the Educare Centre is well integrated into her working environment and providing a quality service for which she is grateful. She recognizes that “a lot of the lower paid staff don’t use the facility” but is able to justify the financial exclusion of “township” children by emphasizing the importance of the “quality” of the Centre with the two being presented as mutually exclusive. Dr Jones gives no sense that this issue is of current concern either to herself or to the University and describes a more passive institutional climate than in the past.

I’m simply not involved at that level anymore. Um, and I get a feeling generally that, there there’s less of those questions being asked. Students are less provocative than they used to be.

During the interview she makes an effort to distance herself from the Centre at the present time, despite currently having a child there. Several times she emphasizes that she was not “au fait” with what was going on now and claims to be too busy to become involved.

I don’t have the time to do anything [for the Centre].

She also suggests that she is not inquiring too deeply about strategic issues currently facing the Centre.

[The situation] seems to have stabilized now as far as I can see.

Dr Jones was keen to be recognized primarily as a busy academic. She finds it difficult to relate to herself, a professional academic, as being gendered. She is

¹⁷ Afrikaans expression for a last child born many years after other children.

aware of the difficulties working mothers face but tends to talk about this in terms of students (suggesting that motherhood is not a part of her image of an academic?). She does not overtly link her involvement with the Centre to a feminist awareness of gender disadvantage in the University environment, but gives the impression that her involvement in the Centre was motivated more by her career requirements. She emphasizes how her need to have control over the way her children were cared for in the Centre led to her involvement in the committee structure, and that she was prepared to pay for quality care. However she places her involvement with the Educare Centre as part of her past, with her current focus being on her career.

Dr Jones' story is one of advantage: unlike other women she obtained a full time academic job at the University before having a PhD, she is in a department which is sympathetic to the needs of working mothers (as evidenced by her describing them making new staff aware of the existence of the Educare Centre), she developed a close supportive relationship with the Educare staff, she was able to get space in the Centre for all her three children, and she was able to afford the fees. The Educare Centre has clearly been a positive experience for Dr Jones. However, having obtained quality care for her children, she does not give the impression of needing or wanting to challenge the University to live up to its equity or liberal ideals.

6.4.4 George

George, whom I have known as a distant colleague for many years, has direct line management responsibility for the Educare Centre. During the interview he lets me know that he has been working in administration and support departments of the University for 35 years, and has had responsibility for the Educare Centre since 1989. Although he knows the focus of my study, when asked at the start of the interview what his current job covers, he talks at length describing other aspects of his job, only mentioning the Educare Centre after several minutes.

I also look after the, well the Educare falls under my responsibility. In other words the the principal, the coordinator she is called, Ms Hendricks, reports to me. Her line reporting structure is to me.

Prior to this admission he describes how he manages cleaning and grounds maintenance contracts, and “*all of the the trading contracts for the university, the ones that will generate money*”. He is also the official holder of the University’s property title deeds, and deals with property sales and purchases and leases. In describing this he hastens to position himself in a hierarchy;

Sometimes there are bigger deals that get that get involved with purchasing of bigger buildings and things like that then our Director would get involved, I would play a peripheral role, but basically we keep the the property portfolio.

After acknowledging the Educare Centre as one of his areas of responsibility, he immediately distances himself from it by saying he does not get involved in the day to day management. He emphasizes how it is different, “*one of these tricky ones*” and describes his involvement in terms of ‘playing a sort of role’:

...so I play that sort of role. I don’t really get involved in the day to day running, the the shall I say the academic side of teaching the children in the crèche.

This slight embarrassment (“*so I play that sort of role*”; the inappropriate use of the word “*academic*”) and distancing (*I don’t spend much time up there*) (see below) is evident throughout the interview. It is almost as if he is unwilling to acknowledge that this child care facility is part of his otherwise very masculine responsibilities.

No, well, you know, it’s my job. Its part of my job as is everything else I do, I don’t see it in any way different. No I enjoy it I I I it’s it’s because I have got such a wide portfolio, I don’t spend that much time up there.....I go in there, every time I go in there I actually go in and I play with the kids and and I have a great time cause I mean I have got 3 kids of my own and I go in there [did any of your kids go to?] No. no no no, its, I love it there, cause I tease all of these children they love, they come running to the door.

George tries to soften this distancing by letting me know that he is a parent and understands playing with children. His glossing over my enquiry about whether his children attended the Centre pushes me away from suggesting the possibility that his children might be cared for at his place of work, and serves to distance him from any personal recognition of the intersection of family and work responsibilities.

His language clearly shows that he finds this intrusion of family into the work environment uncomfortable, but hastens to qualify what he says (*"it's so wonderful"*) so as not to be coming across as critical.

I am a amazed at these people who work there cause you pick up the phone to talk to any one of them at any time you have this cacophony of noise.

and

..you can go there at any time and just hear this geburrel of noise it's so wonderful.

George does not once mention the words woman or women during the interview rather using the word "*parent*" in a deliberate form of 'political correctness'. He seems scared of acknowledging the existence of gender or race in the University environment and does not exhibit any awareness of the significance of the Educare facility for women students or staff, its gendered impact on career development or any awareness of the impact the Centre might have beyond providing a service. It is, just another, albeit strange, service with grounds and buildings and staff that fortunately someone else is managing.

It is interesting to explore George's view of the University. He sees himself as part of a corporation (companies exist to make money) that can "*hold its head up high anywhere*" because it is doing what good corporations should, providing a facility for its members.

..we are a company that can stand, and I think this we can stand proud, we have got, we believe in the importance of of providing this facility for our staff and students. That is to me the crux of the issue. I think that's where we can hold our head up high anywhere. It's one of your corporate responsibilities.

He is aware that the Educare Centre is seen to reflect some of the values of the University but clearly has difficulty in articulating these with conviction despite describing them as being "*more important.*"

But more importantly it's our ethos of non-racism, non-sexism, non-violence, non- this, non-that, and that [Ms Hendricks] will probably tell you far better descriptions of what they do and what they stand for.

He repeatedly suggests that these values would be better described by the Educare coordinator. This awkwardness displayed around talking about the multicultural

ethos (“*non-this, non-that*”) can also be seen when he describes the mixture of children, avoiding the use of ‘black’ and ‘white’ to describe race:

..you know we've got such a mix of of of kids from every single different race, and cultural background. Its unbelievable you have got green, blue, pink, purple..

George appears very conscious of the academic/non-academic hierarchy in the institution. He uses clichés to describe academic environment: “*the beauty*” of “*such inquiring minds*” “*from every walk of life*”. He gives the impression of trying to present himself to me as dutifully buying into a culture which puts academics on a pedestal.

...that is the beauty about having such inquiring minds, the parents of being such nature, academics from professors down to lecturers, doctors, and then students from every walk of life. It's, it's a it's a very interesting.

He speaks extensively of the complexity of managing the staff of the Centre, a responsibility which he describes as a major part of the coordinator's job, frequently emphasizing how good she is at it:

She's such a wonderful calm person

..she's doing a great job

She's done a remarkable job.

I would suspect that there is an element of relief that this is the case, as early on he says: “*I don't spend that much time up there, 'cause really there are generally not problems*” suggesting that he only feels it necessary to become involved when there are problems.

Several times during the interview he effusively commends the Centre and the achievements of the current coordinator. However it is noticeable that when he makes sweeping statements about its success he immediately qualifies them. This serves to reinforce his position of authority, which he seems to move in and out of, and suggests that although the coordinator has been very successful, there is still the need for his oversight.

There's never ever been a bad word from um .. um there might have been 10, 15 years ago, there were cause there were problems you know the staff morale was at an all time low because of this, um but that has changed.

and

..and her staff, her staff have been wonderful. The staff gel, they click, not without hiccups, of course there are, you know..

In describing what he knows of the history of the Centre he appears to be keen to position himself as separate from the discussions that raged around it and he also distances himself from the debates about student bursaries covering Educare fees. He clearly does not wish to be seen as an advocate for this feminist initiative which somehow forms part of his job.

..so there's been debates from the student fees, not student fees, the student administration department have tried to make this one of the official costs that that could qualify for, this is all beyond us, cause we are not involved with this in the slightest..

When he does talk about what he has achieved for the Centre, he ascribes his efforts to being part of his job. *"I use our Department's wherewithal to improve facilities there"*, with the emphasis on *"facilities"* being particularly significant.

Not surprisingly in his interview George does not exhibit the emotional passion for the Centre that others who have benefited as parents have shown. He is effusive in his language about the Centre (*"I think it's a wonderful place. Well sorry, I'm sold!"*) but only too keen to keep it at a distance. It is a small and somewhat embarrassing part of his job:

You know once again it's it's it's it's not something that I sat and I talked to my colleagues here, what do you know about the Educare.

He believes that it is part of his institution's corporate responsibility to provide the services of an Educare facility but he does not elaborate much on what that service is. His position is a relatively easy one, he knows the institution well, understands his position in it, is part of the dominant group of white males, but being very aware of his non-academic, middle management status in this hierarchical institution, experiences a certain degree of powerlessness.

During the interview I got the impression that George was 'doing his job' in the answers he provided to my questions. Only once does George let his portrayal of the caring institution slip when he says in answer to a question about the integration of the Centre into the University: *"..you know I mean to get anything going you have got*

to do it yourself". Here he appears to be acknowledging the inertia of the organization and the effort required to bring about change. One can only speculate on the reasons for George's guarded responses: A lack of trust about what would happen with my recordings? A fear that his superficial understanding of the Centre and its gender foundations will be exposed? A general insecurity as a middle aged white male in a changing environment?

6.4.5 Coordinator: Ms Hendricks

I had not met Ms Hendricks prior to our interview discussion although she told me that she has held the position of coordinator of the UCT Educare Centre for ten years. During the interview she kept her office door open and there were a number of interactions with children, parents and staff giving an indication of her accessibility and level of personal involvement with all in her care. She started the interview by firmly establishing the credentials of the Centre, correcting me when I referred to it as a crèche and telling me that the Educare Centre was about to celebrate its 25th year. Despite not being involved at the time she was able to outline its early history, recognizing the feminist motivation of its initiators:

...the whole thing about empowerment you know women that wants to to educate herself..

Ms Hendricks is keenly aware that the University provides a distinctive environment within which her Centre is operating. The potential for linking with academic departments was attractive to her when she applied for the job and she expected the University to have better facilities than the impoverished NGO environment within which she had previously been working. Coming from outside the concept of a university promised a whole new level of standards and possibilities.

Well that was part of my you know starting here, you know that I would like to use all the other disciplines around just to to make my job a little more challenging. To link up.

The reality was somewhat different and she expresses disappointment at what she found:

finishes with a reflection of the relationship of the University's liberal, multicultural discourse to gender experiences.

The diverse ways in which the University is a changing, lived experience to different individuals was evident in the previous Chapter in which I explored the positionality of my participants. Experiences and perspectives ranged across different sectors of the institution, providing a view from 'above' (senior executive) 'within' and the 'periphery' (the Educare coordinator). Sometimes contradictory images of the University show it to be experienced as conservative and complex, with a reverence for academic knowledge which can serve to exclude some people while consuming the energies of others. Participants experience loneliness and, despite frequent reference to liberal institutional values which the Educare Centre is seen to exemplify, there is a feeling of a monolithic organization that cares more for resources than people. Individuals move in and out of perceived acceptance and belonging, and, indicative of the gendered culture, all those interviewed displayed an awkwardness in talking about reproduction in the context of their current working life. George illustrates this when he describes the purpose of the Educare Centre showing a coyness in talking about women or parents ("*your staff and your students*") and emphasizing its academic impact.

...you've got to have something to enable your staff and your students to get on with their academic activities.....

This awkwardness reflects a working environment which is divorced from reproductive labour. This divide is illustrated in a number of ways. Prof Jennings describes the institution reacting to the request for child care as if it were a "*foreign concept*", something completely beyond institutional experience and something that led to endless discussion.

What was difficult was it was, kind of a foreign concept, and to get a foreign concept accepted into university takes about 100 years. I mean it there was no concept that this would be a good thing for encouraging women, I remember those kind of arguments going on and that that was one of the things that we used to push , but um it, it took a long time to sink in.

This impression is confirmed by Mr Russell's description of how he felt the need to sell the child care concept to the University as an academic issue, rather than a women's issue.

Mr Russell: "The motivation for it was ur as much that this was the way in which you help the University to retain women academics and you help the University to allow women parents to be students, as it was a women's issue, looking at it from the University's perspective as opposed to the feminist perspective."

Interviewer: "Okay so you like to think that's the way it was looked at?"

Mr Russell: "Well it's the way we sold it."

His approach implies that there was an awareness that the University was losing women academics and students and he believed that they would be sympathetic to doing something about this. His need to represent child care as an academic issue rather than a feminist one speaks to a work culture where academic tender is paramount. It also suggests that the institution might not have been as willing to accommodate women parents as he might have hoped. The way in which Mr Russell responds to my questions indicates uncertainty as to whether the Educare Centre has ever come to be seen as an academic issue.

Participants provide another example of the institution's ignorance around reproductive labour when they describe the institution's inability to appreciate the differences between the demands of reproductive labour and its 'normal' type of work. Both Ms Hendricks and her line manager speak of the University's requirement that the Educare staff be on the same conditions of employment as other University staff.

What makes the Educare Centre very different, you know to other educare centres I think it's the fact that here's also, here's unions and here's a set of hours, you know, you actually work 37 and a half hours, you give yourself a lunchtime, and the 20 minute tea break and there's a 20 minute tea break in the afternoon. But, and, we have to adhere to that 'cause otherwise we have the union on top of you. When all those policies were drawn up, the coordinator, the person here you know, should have been in touch with what was happening. (Ms Hendricks)

She expresses frustration that the institution is not prepared to understand the different nature of what she is doing and the implications of her responsibilities. The

It was a total shock to my system when I arrived here because.....You know when I got here, cause I expected this to be a university centre, being a ... university and the standard to be wow!

She also suggests disappointment at the lack of support she found in the University compared to her previous work environments. At first glance this is surprising considering the complex structure which has her responsible to two committees and a manager in Properties and Services.

You know it's so different. Whereas you know working at an NGO there are so many support systems around, we had all these affiliates, and all these trainees from other centres and if they needed support, you know we could attend a management committee and support the supervisor or the principal... [and now?]. Now, you know, there's not that support.

On another occasion she reveals that this lack of support is not just felt toward her as the coordinator but towards the Centre as a whole: "*there's no support really on campus for the Educare Centre as such*". She lets me know that previous coordinators had also found it a difficult working environment.

You know here it's been quite a number of coordinators before me, and their life span is two years, you know and they move on.

Ms Hendrick's respect for the academic environment is evident in the belief in training and qualifications that she exhibits throughout the interview, both with respect to herself and her staff. She talks about her qualifications and her determination to keep upgrading them.

I then started upgrading my qualifications and then when I completed my 3rd year, I thought well, I am marketable now.

and

I felt I was now more marketable because I had a diploma in hand and not a certificate.

and

I then went back and I did the HDE course.

Despite her professional focus and interest in the academic aspect of the Centre, the features of the University environment that appear to dominate her daily experiences are those imposed on the Centre as a result of financial and administrative constraints. She is under constant pressure from the University to reduce costs:

You know the university is also saying that, um, please people, your budgets, we've rather got to have less than last year than more than last year.

With the major cost being staffing, the staff at the Centre had been reduced to the bare minimum both in terms of numbers and in the qualification level of employees. She makes it known that skimping in both of these areas adds to her work load:

I spend so much time sometimes, you know if I have two staff members absent, you know, having to replace them.

She personally feels under pressure to make up for these deficiencies, filling in for absent staff and writing reports to avoid compromising the quality of the Centre which is clearly a matter of pride to her.

...if you look at the schooling, the background, too of the staff members as well you know, not all of them have maybe completed standard 8 you know so its, and yet when the parent gets a report you know, it must be a well-written report, that report could go to a therapist for referral, and it's the image of the whole Centre that needs to you know, so um, so I'm pleased, I'm I'm for the whole idea of development, you know, but I'm also like that the load is on me.

There is no suggestion during the interview (or any of the other interviews) that there is any appreciation from the institution of this added load that the limited staffing budget is imposing on her, a load which is clearly stressing her.

I'm I'm talking just off my heart, you know but I just need to say it to you you know, cause its taken me a while to discuss it with you. I find that a lot of my energy you know needs to go into in to the staff you know that are not formally trained.

Ms Hendricks sees the University as a complex environment in which to work. She sees it as a "system" whose operation she needed to understand. She implies that this was a long struggle that she undertook on her own.

Its extremely different, um, it really took me a good couple of years to understand just how the whole system worked.

She does show that she has learned how to operate within the system, playing on their financial fears and the threat of losing fees. She is clearly proud of herself and claims to have succeeded in getting lots of things done to improve the facilities.

...of course I've also learned you know so I'll just say, speak to him and say I have five parents wanting to withdraw their children because you know their child has got a rash from the and you know and so on and within a second you know, no well they'll find the moneys.

However, she still does not see it as a supportive environment: *"In the beginning it was extremely hard, now you know, I've just, ag...."* and she fails to complete the sentence.

The loneliness of her position is evident:

Really I wanted to go and stand in a corner and cry! and and although my boss is extremely supportive, you know, but he's so busy, you know...

She hastens to say that her current boss is *"extremely supportive"* and says that he visits *"as often as he can, you know, about once a month he pops by"*. This 'popping by' does not provide the emotional support her position needs. People are surprised that she has endured, suggesting that there is an appreciation of the difficulty of her position, but as she expands on the thought, the example she gives is of a very minor issue, peripheral to her professional role, yet she expresses determination to learn and put energy into this so that next year she can be *"so much better"*.

...people ask me, you're still here? But there's a challenge every year. There's always a challenge .. and I'm learning all the time. I mean its you know, we're selling t-shirts and the process was just according to one parent you know, it wasn't a good process. But believe me, next year when I do it its going to be so much better....

Despite all her qualifications and experience after ten years she still seems to feel considerable pressure to prove herself. Whilst this is likely to be due to a complex interaction of historical, societal and personal causes, it also suggests that the University has not been an affirming professional environment for her.

During the interview Ms Hendricks is very keen to talk about the Educare Centre and her experiences working there. She had come to UCT full of expectations and plans expecting a stimulating academic environment, only to find herself in a service department, *"sidelined"* from the institution's academic core for which she has so much respect. This positioning and the complex reporting lines imposed on her were clearly disempowering both personally and professionally, but despite these she is determined to prove herself a success. She learned how to understand and play the complex system that she found the University to be and, using the tender of academia, she continued improving her qualifications.

Mrs Hendricks does not see herself or her work environment as gendered. During the interview she uses gender neutral words when talking about women working at UCT ("*parents*", "*teachers*") and only uses the words "*mom*" and "*granny*" with reference to caring for babies in the home. She is aware that her kind of work is different from that of the rest of the University, but does not acknowledge that this difference relates to the institution's inability to accommodate the requirements of reproductive labour. Her interview suggests the resignation and acceptance of the battered woman, a woman who has colluded to survive repressive realities.

She reassures herself that she is a professional doing a good job and that she is addressing the University's requirements to keep costs down and the numbers of children up. Despite this she gives the impression of still struggling for acceptance, feeding the 'greedy institution' by giving ever more of her time and her energy. She has a vision of the potential role the Educare Centre could play in the University, but there is no evidence that her voice is being heard.

6.5 The participants: Summary remarks

All of the participants describe an involvement with the Educare Centre that has spanned many years. Three of them describe benefiting greatly from the freedom it gave women to pursue their careers, but only two people, Mr Russell and Professor Jennings are prepared to talk about the deeply feminist perspective from which it arose. From their different positions (one a senior student and a mother, the other a member of the University administration) both of these people were involved with the establishment of child care facilities in the 1980s, a period of both racial and gender activism. Today, with the exception of the coordinator, Ms Hendricks, none of the participants are prepared to involve themselves in completing the task started by the original activists. There is a general acceptance that the facility is unaffordable to many students and lower paid staff and that the institution is not capitalizing on its broader gendered impact however all those who previously campaigned for this, now distance themselves.

It is interesting to note how the careers of all those who benefited from the Educare facilities have progressed within the institution. Prof Jennings has progressed from being an activist mother to being offered a senior academic position overseas, Dr Jones has coped with the difficulty of managing three young children, one of whom had a disability, to become a senior lecturer, Mr Russell holds one of the highest offices in the University. None of them lobby for the Educare Centre these days, they no longer have a personal need for it and, as so poignantly experienced by Ms Hendricks, child care facilities are not really taken seriously as part of the academic enterprise. The issue of gender-based inequities in their work environment is not a priority to any of the participants and many of them experience difficulty in even talking in terms of gender or men and women, preferring neutral words such as “people”, “teacher”, “member of staff.”

This introduction to the participants provides context for their perspectives which are interwoven into the themes explored in the next Chapter. As the discussion above has shown their relative personal and professional positions within the institution and with respect to the Educare Centre vary with time, and influence their evolving perspectives around the intersection of reproductive and career-oriented or paid labour. Chapter 7 builds on this by teasing out their experiences of the University's gendered culture. Despite differing positions and perspectives themes emerge from the data which provide insight into the processes of change in this gender environment. The interview and documentary data provide a picture of the growing awareness of the need for change and how different constituencies within the institution reacted to this awareness. The dynamics of change show how activism and negotiation through institutionally recognized channels resulted in both a successful achievement, a model Educare Centre, and the vanishing of the debate around reproductive labour.

CHAPTER 7

7. THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE EDUCARE CENTRE

7.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter I introduced the participants and showed how their differing personal situations and professional positions influenced their gender perceptions and their engagement with the Educare Centre and how this changed with time. I now use the interview data, complemented by documentary data, to address my research objectives focusing on the culture of the institution and the dynamics of gender-based change. Analysis of individuals' perceptions of UCT reveals some of the institution's underlying gender culture, both some 30 years ago when the initiative to establish a crèche started and into the current climate of transformation. This gender culture provides context to an analysis of the dynamics of change, and both the actions of the change agents and the reactions of the institution are explored. The environment at the time led those pushing for change to take a dual approach including activism and attempting to work through institutional structures. Over the years each approach elicited responses from different constituencies in the University and these have resulted in the call for childcare moving from the centre of debate in key committees in the early 1980s to being almost invisible in the new century. As I trace these actions and reactions I also attempt to expose the power dynamics that influence change processes in the University environment.

7.2 Institutional culture

I start this discussion by pulling together some of the impressions of the institutional culture gained from the participants in the previous Chapter. I then use a gendered lens to explore how work is perceived in the University. This leads to descriptions of the gendered institutional culture at the time a crèche was mooted, and the section

Educare staff are encouraged by the institution to think of themselves as similar to other UCT staff with the same conditions of service. George exhibits an institutional pride in the fact that the University is providing such good conditions of service. He positions the University as being prepared to sustain a financial loss to maintain the standards the liberal values of the University require and shows no appreciation that they might in fact have a negative effect on the Centre.

UCT's conditions of service are far better than the Piet Pompies um you know educare centre in Main Road Newlands that doesn't have a medical aid, you know housing subsidy and everything else. So it, there was always a deficit on the UCT, you know the balan..the income was less than the thing, and but the aim over the years is to try and bring that down to nil or to reduce it regularly. (George)

This blindness to different conceptions of valid work suggests inflexibility and a lack of political will to understand situations beyond the male norm. These attitudes are also evident when Ms Hendricks talks about wanting to continue her studies to build up her expertise in working with problem children:

Interviewer: "Do you think the university will encourage that [the further study]?"

Ms Hendricks: "Ja, ja they will. No problem cause you know I'll do it after hours."

Interviewer: "Should you be doing it after hours?"

Ms Hendricks: "Ja I suppose that's, you know, ja, but um you know I would register for the part time course, cause you know time out of your day, just, difficult. Even for me to attend a workshop month end, its not you know not easy."

She is sure that the University will support her further studying because it is "after hours", that is, in the time that she would normally be spending with family. She admits that the institution's demands on her time are so great that she finds it difficult even to attend a workshop, let alone study during her working day. Although she seems unaware of it, this is an indictment on the University as an educational institution that promotes "the love of learning" (UCT Mission Statement, see Appendix 5).

This androcentric view of work gives rise to an environment which is unaware of gender issues. Prof Jennings specifically highlights the gendered institutional culture

when describing the early stages of motivating for child care facilities. The University is described as being “*dragged kicking and screaming*” towards accepting the need for an Educare Centre. Despite recounting memories of those early encounters using aggressive verbs such as “*struggle*” and “*fight*” she does not portray the institution as being antagonistic, but rather conservative and slow to absorb new ideas. This impression is supported by a recollection of an interaction which provides an indication of the gendered climate in the senior committees of the institution at that time. Mr Russell recalls the SRC’s request to Council that women be referred to as ‘Ms’ being described by a member of Council as: “*this miserable proposal*”.

As a young mother Prof Jennings experienced the institutional environment as being unaware of and uninterested in the difficulties working mothers had to face. She recalls a double standard whereby the institution “*said they were [interested in encouraging women]*” but carries on to qualify this by adding “*I don’t know if they were*”. She is aware that gendered attitudes contributed to their lack of awareness.

I just don’t think it was big on their radar screen, for what ever reason. I am sure some of them were gender reasons. I mean they didn’t. They weren’t sensitive to the fact that this kind of thing would be incredibly useful to young women students and staff in particular.

She did not see this as exceptional:

It was just part of the general deal at the time. It wasn’t exactly easy. You felt that you were lucky to get where you had,[laughter] in those days.

By situating the difficulty “*in those days*” she conveys an impression that she believes that there has been an improvement in the gendered climate with time, suggesting that possibly things might be easier now. However she does sound resentful about the past struggle emphasizing the University’s focus on finances when she says:

I think it was unnecessarily err, it was an unnecessary battle in some ways. I mean there is no reason why the place should have been kept sort of on the edge for so long. You know, threatened with closure...if they didn’t balance the books and so on every year, so it was unnecessarily precarious, um so that wasn’t wasn’t very nice.

It is interesting to juxtaposition this conservatism around gender issues against the discourse of liberalism and celebration of multicultural values that the participants repeatedly describe as part of the University ethos. The analyses above suggest that gender diversity is not perceived to be a component of this liberalism. George inadvertently substantiates this impression when he suggests that the reason why the Educare Centre has “*stayed*” has more to do with those multicultural values than any success in addressing gender issues.

This multicultural, it's been brilliant, its um, it's worked well, but those are things because we felt that we are able to to do those things best which is why it has stayed. (George)

Despite the rhetoric around liberal, multicultural institutional values, it is worth noting that the coordinator describes a contrasting lived experience. She is clearly struggling with a feeling of inadequacy in the culture of academia and perceives this as being exacerbated by her race. On several occasions she reveals an assault on her confidence and links this with her being a “*coloured lady*”. “[J]ust a certificate course” is clearly not acceptable to her, but was forced upon her by the apartheid situation at the time.

When I trained you know it was just a certificate course that was available to coloured ladies who wanted to be nursery school teachers.

On her arrival she felt that she had been challenged by University staff because of her race and background.¹⁸

I think when I started here you know there were staff members that found it difficult. I, and, ja, I don't know, you know, I'm just saying that I don't think it was difficult for the first time they had to, there was a coordinator of a different colour.

The discussion in this section has highlighted the conservatism of the University culture, in particular with respect to gender. Much of the description of this was based in the past, but an analysis of the way work is understood, even at present, suggests that this conservatism persists. Male norms of work dominate with little understanding of the how these impact on women with family responsibilities. The juxtapositioning of individuals' experiences of this hegemonic male culture with the University's discourse of multiculturalism and diversity that is repeatedly cited in

¹⁸ Data from the report “The Transformation of University of Cape Town mid 1980s – mid 1990s” (1996) indicated that in 1995 some 56% of the academic, professional and technical staff were white and only 4% of the ‘service’ staff were white.

talking about the Educare Centre suggests that this liberal discourse is not understood to include gender diversity. In the next section I look at the dynamics around an initiative challenging assumptions about work that forced gender issues onto the University agenda.

7.3 Dynamics of Change

Data from the interviews and archived University documents are now used to provide an insight into the dynamics of gender-based change in this large, bureaucratic organization which, as the previous section has shown, demonstrates little awareness of gender as a factor affecting the work environment. The first step towards change involves a process of raising gender consciousness and I start this section describing how this happened in the University in the 1970s. As calls for child care moved gender issues into the institutional debate, this stimulated action on the part of the change agents and reaction from the institutional structures. I first consider the actions of those motivating for change, looking at their dual strategies of activism and negotiation through institutional structures. Thereafter I analyze whether these strategies led to institutional change or merely assimilation. I conclude the discussion of the dynamics of change by highlighting three of the ways in which the institution was able to reduce the impact of this gender-based change initiative on the institutional culture.

7.3.1 Raising consciousness

The process of change starts with a growing consciousness that things could be different. There is a questioning of the way things operate in terms of values of equality and justice, and awareness that the current situation is not inevitable and that actions could be taken that will change the status quo. The discussion in Chapter 2 indicated much of the early literature on organizational change takes the perspective that the need for change is perceived by leaders who then initiate processes to implement this change. As Chapters 3 and 5 indicate, UCT

leadership's social change priority over the past 35 years has been focused on issues related to race, with the pressures of globalization on higher education institutions fore-fronting economic motives for change in more recent years. Thus, against the economic pressures of globalization and in the absence of an institutional desire to bring about a change in the gendered culture of the institution, pressure for gender-based change has come from individuals in the institution who, like Meyerson and Scully's tempered radicals (1995), have struggled with the tension between the institution's values and norms and their own personal, political and professional values.

The call for the establishment of child care facilities in the case University in the 1970s can be seen against the political activism of the time. Although this activism centred on race, socialist awareness led South African women to recognize increasingly the intersections between race, class and other forms of patriarchal domination. In the University environment this growing local consciousness of the particular positioning of women was fed by Marxist thinking which was especially powerful in certain sectors of the University as it engaged with the inequalities of apartheid. Subsequent awareness of the wave of feminist thinking from the United States also reached women in the academic environment. Women were increasingly insisting that they had a right to self-realization and with this came the right to education. Gender inequity, particularly among the students, became a matter for debate on the campus and the Vice Chancellor's Reports show that from 1978 UCT was providing gender disaggregated student statistics.

Analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports shows that, particularly during the apartheid years, students, from their relatively powerless position as a young, transitory population, have on a number of occasions exerted transformative pressure on the institution. In the context of radical student activism, students had been taking up feminist issues and Mr Russell describes the SRC as "*progressively from the early seventies taking on board women's issues*". Within the context of the gendered culture of the time described in the previous section it is not surprising that initial calls for the establishment of child care facilities met with limited success. A reference to an early approach to the University Council is described in an unsigned

document entitled “Nursery School / Crèche” (1974b¹⁹) in the University archives. The deliberate distancing of the source of the request, “*wives of members of staff*”, is revealing as is the fact that it appears that it was the students (SRC) not the “*members of staff*” that asked for further investigation.

In September 1973 the University Council considered a request from a group of wives of members of staff for support for the establishment of a nursery school for the children of staff and students. The request was for a site upon which to establish a nursery school and for financial support for the running of the nursery school. Council did not regard the provision of a nursery school as a University function, but agreed to a request from the SRC that the question of the provision of a crèche be investigated.

Following this investigation, a proposal to establish a crèche was approved in principle by Council at their meeting in February 1974, however Government regulations were so onerous that the idea was shelved for several years. These regulations required that any premises within which more than six children were accommodated had to be registered in terms of the Manual on Crèches, published by the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions. Registration conditions covered minimum space and accommodation requirements, staffing, and health and safety requirements (1974a). A further impediment is raised in a University document which states:

In terms of the licenses issued by the various bodies, it is not possible to mix the races in any one establishment. (1974b).

Despite the prohibitive nature of these requirements and lack of formal support from the institution, in 1975 the student mothers proceeded to start an unofficial crèche (open to all races) at the Tennis Club. This was short lived and was described as being “*overwhelmed with babies*” with the result that the premises could not cope (1977).

In 1977 during the graduation ceremony, the Vice Chancellor had said that he would like to see more women students at UCT and this was seized upon by senior women students who wrote to him motivating for crèche facilities on campus (1978). Without waiting for official permission, in 1978 they started a child-minding service run by

¹⁹ Dates in brackets refer to documents from the University Archives listed in Appendix 2

volunteers, utilizing what was subsequently described as “*that dreadful place in the Student's Union*” (Mr Russell).

Interviewer: “Did they try and get the University to do it for them?”

Mr Russell: “They just did it and it was done with SRC backing and with reluctant acceptance by the Student Affairs administration..... They were worried about hygiene, they were worried about a whole lot of things, but the the students took the whole responsibility.”

The feminist discourse is evident in descriptions of the early days, particularly among students with the SRC providing support and a route into University structures. Young women in the seventies increasingly believed that marriage and childbirth should not hinder their continuing education or the prospect of a career.

..[T]he Educare Centre was started you know by a group of women who had the need you know... women that wants to educate herself you know further education, but what happens to her children and in order for you as a mum to give of your best you need to know that your children are taken care of by a person or a, a centre. (Ms Hendricks)
and

I remember the arguments going something like ‘How do they expect women to be involved in, you know, in getting decent educations, and being staff members and so on if they don't encourage child care’.
(Prof Jennings)

These mature students had a feminist awareness of the gendered division of labour and were challenged by the multiple roles expected of ‘liberated’ women. It is an indication of the commitment of these young women to their careers that most of them mentioned by name in the narratives around the establishment of the crèche currently hold senior positions, many still in higher education²⁰.

Articulated University values of equity and quality form a powerful discourse around the Educare Centre. These were also incorporated into the impetus for change, and the crèche was always envisaged to embody a strong commitment to quality, diversity and equity of access. Quality was closely linked to parents’ involvement in the facility.

..[I]t means that staff members who have young children and students who have young children can have the opportunity to put their children

²⁰ Three women are Heads of Department, one a Dean, one holds a senior position in local government

in a educate which is well run and which they have a big say in. (Prof Jennings)

The emphases on the quality of care and on easy accessibility by the working parents were also important in addressing their conflicting priorities of motherhood and personal development, and, as they pushed for premises on the campus, the issue of convenience became a clearly articulated part of their vision.

I could visit the baby and breast feed her um you know at regular times and I felt completely secure that she was fine. (Dr Jones)

The decision to close the informal crèche initiative in the 1970s because of government insistence on racial segregation is illustrative of the symbolic importance attached to equity (1988a). Equity of access is also linked to affordability, initially for students and later all members of staff irrespective of salary.

The fees that we charge people have always been on a sliding scale. Students and and low grades staff pay a little, you know 3 or 4 ranges of fees with professors paying the most. (George)

The vision was that affordability was not to compromise quality. However, as the quote below illustrates, it later becomes possible to justify racial exclusion (the reference to “townships”) on the basis of quality.

Dr Jones: “There is a sliding scale of fees depending on income. Which I also think is a very good thing. So they try and keep the fees down for student parents.”

Interviewer: “So its basically affordable”

Dr Jones: “Ja, well ja. It’s still not, I don’t think. The other thing is that there was an argument a long time, a lot of the lower paid staff don’t use the facility because care is much cheaper in the townships or where they live, um, and simply because of the numbers and the kind of quality that’s been tried to be established here. So it’s not the cheapest service, but I think it really is a good quality one.”

These descriptions of the early interactions around establishing a University crèche show that consciousness of the need for child care arose from a feminist awareness of the gendered division of labour which was empowered by the student activism of the time. Young mothers, an overtly disempowered group, driven by “*pure necessity*” (Prof Jennings) were able to force issues of reproductive labour onto the institution’s agenda. By repeatedly putting child care before “*an unwilling administration*” (Mr

Russell), it was eventually incorporated into the institutional structures and self-image.

....Educare Centre is not a nice-to-have, it is a part of the university's responsibility to provide this facility. (George)

The success of this consciousness-raising in the environment which has been described as extremely conservative, brings several factors to light. Firstly, those motivating for change all shared the same deeply personally experienced need which united them in an environment which they had experienced as challenging. It is interesting to note that none of the participants identified specific activist leaders and the process of struggle was described as being “*quite democratic*”:

It was quite democratic I think. Just remembering back, and I can't actually remember, I can't pinpoint a leader. (Prof Jennings)

Secondly, the underlying motivation for the gender-based initiative was aligned to the academic hegemony in the institutional culture. The women demanded child care so as to be able to participate fully in the academic core of the University. Thirdly, their appeal included the multicultural liberal discourse of the institution, refusing to operate under apartheid conditions. Finally, their alignment with the students was strategic. At that time students were a force for equity in the University and an integral part of the leadership's image of being a liberal anti-apartheid institution. Even if committees did not have to take “*wives of members of staff*” seriously, the institution had to take students seriously.

This brief look at the process of raising consciousness within University structures of the need for gender-based action serves as an introduction to analyses of the dynamics of change, and in the remainder of this Chapter I analyze the actions taken by the young women change agents and the reactions of the institutional structures.

7.3.2 Action and reaction

The growing consciousness that the University might have a role to play in reducing the stresses on women with small children led to parents taking action to bring this about. The data indicates that there were two main change strategies, activism and

negotiation using University structures and procedures. Each of these stimulated responses from different sectors within the University. In this section I outline the use of these strategies in the conservative androcentric environment and look at how the University responded to them.

Activism

Although the University Council had agreed to a request from the SRC to consider the provision of childcare facilities as early as 1973 (see above), this formal acknowledgement of the feminist need did not translate into action on the part of the University and there is no indication of any leadership being taken around this issue by the institution until forced to do so by the pressures of activism and municipal regulations. Activism on the part of students particularly around the country's racial policies was a feature of University life during the 1970s and 1980s. The main form of this activism was peaceful protest through sit-ins, boycotts of classes, and mass assemblies but there were outbursts of violent protest, disrupting University events and on occasion coming into conflict with civil authorities, resulting in arrests and bannings. This turbulence can be seen as providing a backdrop and environment which would have facilitated the use of activism by the senior women students around the provision of child care facilities. The young mothers in the 1970s, frustrated by the lack of action after formal approaches through University structures and driven by necessity, took direct action utilizing the opportunities and resources at their disposal. These young activists were exposing themselves as outsiders to the patriarchal culture of the institution, but their repeated attempts to engage with the institution also show their commitment to it, and a desire to reform its inherent discriminatory practices.

Recollections of the activist action and documents in the University archives forefront discourses of struggle and, on the part of the institution, discomfort. Struggle is a theme in the participants' descriptions of the early interventions and there is an element of pride in identifying them as activist.

...the people involved in the early stages of this Educare were actually political activists. I mean people had got some experience in activism and this was one way that they did it. (Prof Jennings)

and

...[I]t was an entirely from the ground up movement.[T]he people involved werequite pushy about it, they were people who, some of them were activists. So they didn't mind doing a little bit of pushing and shouting and shoving, and that's how we got the room. (Prof Jennings)

As suggested by her use of the words “pushing”, “shouting” and “shoving” at least one student mother remembers this direct action as going beyond the accepted norms of behaviour. This is echoed by the memory of a senior administrator who recalls that:

Pre-'82 it exists by virtue of activism and an uncomfortable administration. (Mr Russell)

This discomfort was also voiced by the academic community. A letter from the Acting Head of the Department of Applied Mathematics to the Registrar (1979) states:

Through complaints from staff of the Applied Mathematics Dept about being disturbed by persistent crying of a baby (or babies) from the rooms opposite, it has come to my notice that there is a baby minding service on campus. I am not sure if you are aware of the situation and whether the various health regulations etc., are satisfied but if this is an approved service then I would like to express my concern at the noise which interferes with some people's academic work in our department.

The early discomfort at the invasion of ‘the other’ (confrontational young women, crying babies) into the conservative patriarchal environment continued as illustrated in a note about the Centre (1986b) from which it would appear that ‘confrontation’ with the parents was not unexpected.

In summary, the Centre has problems, some of which require money to cure. Some require a degree of tough management which I am reluctant to attempt.....[as] establishing the degree of control and hierarchical structure preferred by the Administration would lead to confrontation with parents..

The concept of confrontation was echoed in a confidential note from the Senior Industrial Relations Officer to the Vice Chancellor (1986c) describing an Educare Centre parents meeting. In response to a threat to increase fees, the writer clearly believed that the parents will take action. The interaction has a ‘David and Goliath’ feel about it, with the small group of parents threatening a monolithic administration.

At the end of the meeting, I informed the parent body that should we not receive additional funds, I would be compelled to implement a revised fee structure which would ensure greater income from parents. The parents accepted that I would do this, but stated that they would have to respond to such a step in whatever way they believed appropriate.

There was no hostility to me personally, and they accepted that should they act to pressure the Administration, I would not be party to such actions.

It is revealing that he considered it necessary to note that there was no hostility towards him personally (but clearly there was hostility towards the institution) before he positioned himself very clearly on the side of the Administration. He concluded, describing the threat and counter threats that give insight into the nature of the negotiation between the powerful institution and the determined parents.

My closing remarks were that in deciding for themselves on these matters, parents should be careful not to damage the success already achieved, and cause the closure of the Centre.

In conclusion, we face potentially difficult times ahead. I will continue to work as best I can to ensure a harmonious future at the Center, but will be unable to stop the parent body from taking protest action should they decide to do so.

He anticipated “difficult times” and portrayed the “success” achieved so far as fragile. He implied that it is the actions of the parent body (the “pressuring” and “protest action”), not those of the institution (which is not providing sufficient funds) that will destroy the “harmonious future” of the Centre for which he claimed to be striving.

In describing reaching for this “harmonious future” the women participants use the word “struggle” seven times and the word “fight” five times. Finally in 1981 the concerns of the Administration, combined with pressure from the SRC, resulted in the University making La Grotta, one of its properties adjacent to the campus, available for what had now become known as the Educare Centre. This was not the end of the struggle as it took a further seven years before a permanent site was provided.

I knew that there was a long struggle and that there was a lot of, ur, an endless discussion about the site. I presume the University wanted La Grotta back, and that they said that they could have a site, somewhere on campus, but there was an endless fight about it. (Prof Jennings)

In this process of struggle the activists who, being students and women, were relatively powerless, were attempting to exert pressure on the powerful male-dominated bureaucracy. The ineffectiveness of this is highlighted when, despite the ongoing internal battles, the impetus for the University reaching a firm decision about

the existence of this informal crèche came from outside, when its premises were inspected by the City Medical Officer of Health. The University was faced with a threat to close the facility unless stipulated minimum requirements were complied with (see above). The combination of external legislative power exerted on the University and the institution's formal acknowledgement that 'child care' was part of its responsibility as an enlightened employer with liberal values forced the institutional action. This resulted in the University Council formally accepting that provision of crèche facilities for students and staff should be a University project in December 1982 (Council Minutes, December 1982) and the informal crèche became known as the UCT Educare Centre. The length of the written motivation for continuing the Educare facility (8 closely typed pages emphasizing the University's equity commitments as a "*progressive*" employer and the cost benefit to the University in attracting and retaining students and staff) that was presented to Council in May 1988 by the Registrar (1988a) supports the impression that this major step was not easy to achieve.

7.3.3 Negotiation and institutionalization

Concurrently with activism the parents had been involved in negotiation with the University using recognized institutional instruments such as letters, committees and administrative structures. Here I look at the processes of negotiation and the reactions they stimulated, and explore how this negotiation led to institutionalization. Prof Jennings reveals some of the difficulty in moving from activism to integration when she recalls the power struggle to control the way the Centre was run. The parents wanted to continue to have their input, but the institution, in return for providing support, wanted to gain greater control.

There was quite a lot of arguing back and forth and what he [the Registrar] was fighting for was greater control, um and the parents were fighting for continuing democracy. So he felt that you know, if the university is going to have any say in this thing, or going to support it, then they needed greater control.

From the onset, those involved in establishing the crèche saw the value of working through committees in the University environment. The earliest references in the

University Archives to the committees involved with the crèche are in the minutes of the SRC (1980). In these the SRC formally transferred responsibility for the management of the crèche from the Women's Movement to the "*Femm. Committee*". Describing the early days, one parent says:

There was some kind of a committee....We used to meet once a month or something, and so it was a very democratic kind of thing.
(Prof Jennings)

Despite the democratic committee approach being an accepted way of functioning in the institution, there was recognition that it was cumbersome and could complicate negotiations with the administration:

You know, there were sometimes when people, or when things are very democratically run, they run as kind of a huge unwieldy committee effectively. It means that you know, decisions aren't taken quickly, or that sometimes people argue endlessly about things, um, it didn't go down very hellava well always. (Prof Jennings).

During this period records in the Archives refer to a parents' committee and an informal advisory committee comprising parents and Educare staff. This latter operated for almost a decade, only being formalized as the Educare Management Committee in 1988 reporting to both the Registrar on policy issues and the Budget Committee on financial matters (1988b). The level of dialogue that the Management Committee demanded with the institution is illustrated in an undated letter addressed to Dr S Saunders, Vice Chancellor, signed by S L Bailey, Acting coordinator, on behalf of the Management Committee (n. d.), requesting a meeting with three of the most powerful people in the institution: the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor responsible for Equity and the Registrar, to raise the Committee's concerns about the continued existence of the Centre. The outcome of this meeting was the establishment of another committee (1992). This became the Educare Advisory Committee which became operational in late 1992. It was constituted to be more representative and to have greater influence than the Management Committee and comprised parents, teachers, and SRC and staff union nominees with a Chair being nominated by the Registrar. Its responsibilities included general oversight of the Management Committee and budget and policy recommendations.

On the Educare Advisory Committee it was more about, the provision of educare at a tertiary institution [yes] and what the role of the University should be and that kind of thing. (Dr Jones)

Once the formal Educare Management and Advisory Committees had been established they became the locus of the interaction with the University administration. However recollection of Council meetings during the 1980s suggests that even before the formation of the formal Educare Advisory Committee the Educare Centre had been receiving considerable attention in Council meetings:

... they were sick and tired of these wretched debates about Educare. Because if you know, really did take up a disproportionate amount of time. (Dr Jones).

These Committees served a dual function. On one hand the debates raised the profile of the crèche initiative and they also provided a channel into the power structures within the institution. The Chairs of both committees were able to use the authority of the committee structure to further “*the cause*”.

There were very interested people on that committee at that time, and really you know fought for the, the you know, the cause. (Ms Hendricks).

and

I think [Mr M] was a wonderful chair and did a hell of a lot to try and promote the place. (Dr Jones)

On the other hand they also served to defuse, neutralize and contain any activist demands. This latter aspect will be explored more fully later. Both Committees are now playing a much less defensive role as the Centre’s activities have been accepted into the fabric of the institution. The current coordinator sees the Advisory committee as playing a visionary role and as being her key ally in an environment which she has experienced as disinterested and alienating:

.....my Educare Advisory committee was to me you know, a body that I could really, that would support issues because they saw things you know, in five years time, you know.” (Ms Hendricks)

The discussion above shows how negotiation with the University structures resulted in an integration into those structures with the formation of two formally constituted committees focused on the Educare Centre. However, it is worth noting that although the Educare Centre was fully integrated as a part of the institutional structure in the late 1980s, this is not the daily reality experienced by Ms Hendricks.

Ms Hendricks: “... they decided let’s go through that process [investigating possible outsourcing] and if we, if we become a core function, the university has got to treat us as a core function and not

treat us as a sideline. But I think that sideline will always be there because....[She does not complete the sentence]"

Interviewer: "So you went through the process and they decided that it should be a core function, but you still feel like you are not really core?"

Ms Hendricks: "We still feel as though we are not really core."

She describes how, as recently as 2000, during the investigation into outsourcing, the Centre was again subjected to the yardsticks of 'core business':

.... [E]ven when I started there was once again another talk about possible outsourcing there was all these other departments that were being outsourced, like gardening, maintenance and we were one of them...(Ms Hendricks)

Her bitterness at the Educare Centre being grouped with services like "gardening" and "maintenance" comes through clearly. For her, the current format of institutionalization of the Centre falls short of her dreams.

In the next section I analyze the effect of this institutionalization and the degree to which it contributed towards meeting the originally expressed needs of the young mothers. I also question whether institutionalization has led to gendered change or merely assimilation and neutralization.

7.3.4 Change or assimilation?

The discussion above has traced how activism and negotiation have resulted in the institutionalization of child care and the establishment of a facility that is acknowledged to be very successful by both management and parent consumers. There is little doubt that all the participants believe that the Educare Centre provides high quality child care. As one of the managers says:

[Our classes] have now been filled cause you don't fill a place unless its got a reputation. I mean you don't send your child unless you have sussed the place out. So it means that we are doing something right 'cos the community's booking in. (George)

This perception is endorsed by parents who describe their experiences of the Centre as an "*ab-so-lutely perfect situation*" (Mr Russell) "*[Our daughter] had a fantastic*

time" (Mr Russell), "I felt completely secure that she was fine." (Dr Jones) and "It helped me personally, and my kids enjoyed it, they made friends" (Prof Jennings). It is also seen to have a good educational programme which benefited the children:

The Educare Centre has managed to introduce a reasonable amount of formal curriculum while retaining the necessary majority emphasis on play. And I think it has been a very good balance.. (Mr Russell)

From an institutional perspective it is described as running well with the current coordinator exerting strong leadership:

"..[The coordinator] has been able to build on something solid and she's done a remarkable job. The staff work, well we have had very little staff turnover. The place is running well ... (George)

and the management structures are positively perceived by the administration and parents.

When I've recommended the place to people I have said that perhaps one of the best things is that you can question what's going on and you know that there's a system which allows you to question and to see the feedback and that sort of thing. (Dr Jones)

In the light of these positive perceptions of a convenient, well-run, quality child care facility, the question that must now be asked is: has the establishment of the Educare Centre met the originally expressed need and is there a noticeable change in the institutional culture? As explained in Chapter 4 this gender-based change initiative was selected for study as it has the potential to bring about change in the gender culture of the institution. This could happen both through the process of establishment and through its presence on campus. Mr Russell, the most senior and centrally located of the participants interviewed admits that this has not happened:

It's not as well publicized a thing as it should be. And therefore the impact, ..., the impact of why are we, why do we have an Educare Centre is not as strong as it should be, or could be.

This perception that it has not made the impact on the University that it might have is also evident in Prof Jennings' use of qualifiers (probably, supposedly) when talking about the benefit of the Centre to the University.

Well I think probably, um the university is benefiting from it now [with a smile], because um they, they are seen as innovators in having an educare system on on the campus, which is supposedly available to staff and students, ... Um so I think it is something for the university to be proud of. It was a real achievement. Um so whether [laughter] they

were dragged kicking and screaming in it is still something to be proud of.

Somewhat surprisingly for an (ex-)activist and possibly reflecting an institutional culture that vanishes gender, she suggests that it is a good thing that the Centre is now taken for granted.

I really think it's probably something which becomes er almost humdrum, now, you know, taken for granted and I think that's act..the way it should be. Having an educare thing on the university campus should be taken for granted. (Prof Jennings)

However, awareness (rather than being taken for granted) is a key factor in effecting gendered change, in particular awareness among the leadership. An ultimate indictment on the Centre's lack of visibility, and thus change impact is provided by Mr Russell when he admits that two of the most powerful individuals on the campus are probably unaware of its presence or impact:

You know, I, I don't know whether the [current] VC knows of its existence just to start at the top. I doubt that the Chair of Council knows..

The interviews also reveal that the Educare Centre is not meeting the broader need for child care on the campus. This emerges in two ways. Firstly it is not accessible to all staff and students. All of the participants raise the issue of the fees which, although adjusted to take income levels into account, are still excluding students and lower paid staff:

The customers are the staff members mostly, I would say you know that 75 [out of 80] are staff members.... Mostly academic and support staff..... But I do find that a person in pay class 5²¹, you know still finds it very difficult to afford [the subsidized fee] ...and they will not bring their children. (Ms Hendricks)

It is interesting to note that several of the participants do not express any great need to change this:

It's not cheap, its not the cheapest around, I mean you know there are there are other little student places we hear in flats nearby where people keep their children but those are the ones that can't afford it. I can't, we can't help that it would be lovely to be able to make it a free facility but you know that would that would entail more classes more staff. (George)

²¹ One of the lowest pay classes on the campus, and the one to which many of the Educare staff belong.

Here the excuse presented is that if it were cheaper, they would have more 'customers' and that would mean additional classes and getting more staff – clearly not something that is perceived as being desirable! The management perspective conveyed is that if “*the place is full*” then the Centre is doing what the University expects of it.

I am not saying one can't benefit from wider exposure, but then the place is full, she's doing a great job. (George)

Secondly, most of the participants are aware that there are many more parents and children who might benefit from an enlarged facility. Mr Russell believed that it could easily double in size and Ms Hendricks spoke about the waiting lists and the fact that she can “*never accommodate all the parents*”.

It's always surprised me that there hasn't been a move to enlarging it. You know, we, its got a capacity of, well it depends how you measure it, 65 80, um and if it were better marketed I have absolutely no doubt it would sustain double the number. (Mr Russell)

There is no indication that the institution feels the need to enlarge the facilities or that it is being subjected to any pressure so to do. It is also indicative of the unchanged gendered climate that although the need for after-school care for older children has been raised on a number of occasions over the years, beyond an experiment during one long vacation, it has not been followed up further²².

It has always been my contention, and I still think that Properties and Services should do something about this, that they would have done very well to run an aftercare facility. We did in fact, in fact on 2 or 3 occasions we did run quite successful December January facility for staff children. (Mr Russell)

From these comments by the participants, it seems that there is little ongoing motivation or pressure on the institution to attempt to address the requirement for child care for the institution's nearly 25000 staff and students. There is no indication of any climate of activism or collective action to address the challenges reproductive labour continues to bring to the work environment. Those who had motivated for gendered change had now passed beyond that stage of their lives and as one participant says:

²² In late 2006 this idea was revived by a woman member of the academic staff and an experimental after school care facility will operate during the 2006/07 summer holidays.

I'm simply not involved at that level anymore. Um, and I get a feeling generally that, there there's less of those questions being asked. Students are less provocative than they used to be. (Dr Jones)

This present-day lack of concern or involvement suggests that the presence of the Educare Centre on campus has not effected any significant change in the gendered culture. Rather it would seem that the Centre's presence has served to defuse any feminist pressure. It is revealing that, as highlighted in the previous Chapter, most of the participants still exhibit a degree of embarrassment when talking about the intersection of children with their work environment. With time even passionate activists become absorbed into the androcentric, academic culture.

The analysis above has shown that despite the success of the early activists and the fact that the Educare Centre has survived to celebrate its 25th birthday, the University does not manifest as having any deep understanding around or acceptance of reproductive labour as a valid area of institutional concern. Although the Centre is operating at its full capacity it is not meeting the need that was originally brought to the University's attention by the student body. It remains on the outskirts of the academic endeavour and daily operation of the University, and there is no significant change in the realities faced by the majority of young mothers as they struggle with the impact of the gendered division of labour on their career development. The overall perception that one gains from the interviews is that the Centre has been a success as a facility and the institution feels good about having it. However it has not succeeded in engaging with the fact that having large numbers of its staff and students as parents might affect the working environment. I therefore contend that the institutionalization of the Centre has resulted in the assimilation and neutralization of the thrust for gender-based change.

In the following sections I tease out some of the ways in which institutionalization has served to neutralize the gendered impact of the Educare Centre, assimilating it into the dominant patriarchal culture. The data suggest three main arenas in which neutralizing power dynamics operated: the politics associated with formal institutional structures, the politics of resource allocation, and in political and micropolitical processes of vanishing the Centre.

7.3.5 Institutional politics: The power of formal structures

In looking at the power of formal structures to impact on the process of change I start by providing examples of the way committees and the committee structures have been used for political ends. I then look at other outworkings of institutionalization that result not in the integration that might have been expected, but in the feelings of alienation that the coordinator describes.

Committees are a feature of the academic environment. They became an important component of the Educare Centre's integration into the University, playing a role in shaping how change is brought about, and marking critical steps in the institutionalization process. The case institution currently has over 85 committees and working groups, covering almost every sphere of activity on the campus. The committees range in power and influence, depending on their composition and areas of responsibility. The committee is essentially the political space on the campus where democracy is seen to be done. Here ideas and issues are debated, opinions are expressed and suppressed, and power is wielded by those who understand the terrain. The committee provides both a safe space for raising and debating issues, and gives authority in a way that is easily recognized by the University to individuals who take these issues further. However the committee structure can also be used as a way of exerting control.

An interesting example of using the committee for political manipulation is recalled by two of the participants. In 1995, once the Educare Centre had been firmly established within University structures, the University administration appointed a Chair to the Advisory Committee who did not believe that the Centre should continue to exist. This appeared to be a direct attempt on the part of the University Administration to close the Centre, using the unsympathetic Chair as a 'hatchet man'.

Dr Jones: "There was a stage where the chair of the Educare Advisory Committee changed hands he just had one view and that was that this place, if you balance it against what we could spend it was just not worth it, 50 children against a professor's salary.."

Interviewer: "And he was actually Chair of the Advisory Committee?"

Dr Jones: "He was brought in as chair of the Advisory Committee. Which there could be only one reason for that move and that was to try and you know..... but that year was a complete and utter battle and every meeting was like a fight. Also he spoke about, instead of using like single parent, he would talk about unmarried mothers. ...[I]t was very much the feeling that he had been brought in to do some of the hatchet job on the Educare Centre."

Another participant describes this Chair person as a "a bit of a hit man":

Not surprisingly this stimulated heated interaction between the members of the Advisory Committee and the University administration which was recorded in a curt memo to the administration in September 1995:

..I was asked to convey to you.....the Committee's feeling that it is inappropriate for a chairperson to be imposed upon the Committee, who openly declares his lack of interest in, and commitment to, its brief. (1995).

This resulted in the Vice Chancellor taking over the Chair of the Committee for a while and the Educare Centre benefited from this overt tapping into the power hierarchy of the institution.

Dr Saunders then took over the chair cause it was getting nowhere and he came out of there firmly supporting the Educare and the need by the the need for the university to have a facility of this kind. (George)

Whilst the impact of such a powerful ally is warmly remembered by several of the participants, the incident and the fact that it was perpetrated through formal the committee process is an indictment on a University that espouses liberal values. Dr Jones' recollections above are also notable in revealing the gendered attitude of an appointed official (in 1995!) and the fact that he felt comfortable basing his arguments on a value system that prioritizes cost saving to benefit the academic hierarchy.

Beyond interactions within committees, the committee structure has also been set up in a way that effectively disempowers the coordinator (as highlighted in Chapter 6) and stifles any initiatives emanating from the Centre in a blanket of bureaucracy.

These are consequences of the hodgepodge of reporting lines that even the coordinator's line manager is uncertain of:

[The Centre] has a line committee to the Educare Advisory Committee to the Registrar which is a a another committee which is a dotted line, or a dotted line, but they report to the Registrar reports to Council, I presume? And but the line function of the staff are Properties and Services Department. (George)

The intensely disempowering effect of this is evident in the coordinator's description of trying to implement a simple change:

So if I can just get the structure correct again: it is the management committee and we meet on a monthly basis, and they help with the day-to-day running of the Educare Centre. ... I'll just use this example. There's been a request that the Educare Centre closes at 5 o'clock on a Friday, because most of the staff members do not have ur their own transport ... so if a parent is 5 minutes late, it really impacts on what time, sometimes they get home after 8, you know and it's not very safe. So the management committee cannot, you know, just okay that. The management committee has got to take that now to the advisory committee, and the advisory committee will decide as to whether, you know, and then say to [her line manager in Properties and Services] you know what happens to the hours, It's not working and you work something out with regard to that. And obviously you would have had some data from parents as well, whether they think it's okay. You know, cause obviously the parents would have a say..

It is unclear what areas she has authority over and what management decisions she is allowed to make yet it would seem that she is required to take total responsibility for the successful operation of the Centre and the welfare of the children and staff in her care.

The application of standardized working conditions for Educare staff (discussed above) provides another example of the negative effect of institutionalization. It has resulted in staff costs that are higher than the norm, adding to the costs of the facility, and this served to provide fuel for those who used financial arguments against the provision of child care.

Part of the issue was that we were paying minimum wages to people in the Educare Center. The educare industry in Cape Town did not pay minimum wages and therefore if you outsourced you would save money and you wouldn't have the problem of staff and everything else. (Mr Russell)

These examples show how formal structures and procedures can be used to destabilize and disempower and in this way impede and contain change. Some of the actions described are overtly political reflecting a clear purpose. Others reflect the androcentric institutional culture in which child care has a low priority and work is narrowly defined. Over the years both have had a negative impact on efforts to bring about gender-based change. In the next section I shift focus to an area which has a very high priority in the institution, resources, and look at the political use of resources in the process of change.

7.3.6 Control of resources

A major way in which power is exercised in the institutional environment is through control of resources such as funds and space. Once the University had accepted the inevitability of both the legal health and safety requirements and the feminist need, the focus of the majority of the dialogue around the establishment of a childcare facility shifted to allocation of resources.

Analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports shows the strength of the discourse around buildings and physical structures in the University. The provision of space on campus is thus a key landmark in the process of institutionalization. Data from the interviews shows that prevarication around space was used as a tool to keep the Educare Centre and any gendered change that it might bring at a distance. This took place around both the initial provision of temporary accommodation in 1981 and the later provision in 1988 of a custom-built facility. There was the perception that, realizing the importance of a physical presence, the University had been avoiding providing a building.

Ja there was a lot of resistance. For instancethey thought they'd identified an an empty. house somewhere on campus, ... then they were told [by Properties and Services], no it would cost far too much to put up a crèche there, and it would cost billions to knock the old place down and put up something new. And she [chair of the committee] went, she would go and get an independent quote, and it was just nothing, you know it just wasn't in the same order. So just, I think there wasn't a lot of help. (Prof Jennings)

Dr Jones sums up the significance of finally getting a custom-built building:

...then eventually um you know got the University to get the building which was an incredible step. Now that might have taken some championing to do that. (Dr Jones)

This movement to a new custom-built building provided a level of security and acceptance for the first time in over ten years. It is worth noting the significance of securing a bricks and mortar building within the academic space of the institution, and the quote below from a senior university administrator highlights what a powerful statement of the Educare Centre's acceptance by the organization the building is. It would seem that the very physical presence of the Centre on campus confers reality on a previously marginal concept. (Later I discuss how the positioning of this building has been such as to reduce the effect of this physical presence.)

I think once it got a building it was relatively secure. Getting the building was the crucial thing. (Mr Russell).

Space is closely linked with cost and the provision or withholding of funding was a powerful theme in all the interviews. The participants' recollections show the University repeatedly turning the debate around the establishment of an effective educare facility away from human values, to a cost-benefit analysis in terms of the patriarchal, academic culture of the institution:

A lot of it was mustering argument to keep this facility, as against people saying but you could employ a professor on the amount of subsidy. (Dr Jones)

All the participants interviewed speak of the struggle to obtain financial support from the University. This is captured in the confidential note from the Senior Industrial Relations Office to the Vice Chancellor (1986c). The writer appeared stressed by his interaction with the parents:

I explained the difficulties facing UCT, and handled critical comment as best I could. Parents perceive UCT as a wealthy institution, and suggested that University budgets be examined to determine where money was being spent which could/should be used for the Educare Center...

It is telling that in making suggestions about increasing financial support for the Educare Centre the writer (representing the University authorities at the meeting he

is describing) suggested to the parents that the financial responsibility rests with either the students, the workers or the women; not the University!

It was suggested and accepted, that the parent body seek support from the SRC, Women's Movement and the UCT Workers Committee. Further action could involve non-payment of fees, or continuing to pay at existing fee rates rather than the necessary increased rates.

Until 1996 the University required that Educare fees cover all the costs incurred by the University and initially parents' fees did cover operating costs. In addition, once Council had accepted the need to provide a building, the parents' fees were also expected to amortize the University's loan for the cost of the building. As a power play this served to burden the parents, reduce the funds available to improve facilities and it attracted the attention of those competing for University resources.

[I]t was also having to bear the amortization of the building meant it looked more expensive than anything else does on the campus. (Mr Russell)

Once institutionalized as a University 'service', the childcare facility was seen in terms of resources – space, staffing, administrative support and budget. The struggle to bring about gendered change becomes articulated as a struggle to secure these resources. It is clear that the University administration used the budget debate as a 'legitimate' way of resisting acceptance of the Educare facility into the core of the University. It should also be noted that University committees (dominated by men) are much more comfortable discussing finances than gender issues and this focus on finances enabled them to avoid theorizing around gendered labour practices.

Participants comment on the anomaly of the small Educare budget being listed as a specific line item during debates on the whole University budget. This had the unwelcome result that the Educare budget was for many years a topic of heated debate in the most senior University Committees.

At this stage it was itemized annually in the budget as a single line item, and understandably people who didn't see why we should be subsidizing 'unmarried mothers' ja, that attitude, used to get excited in the Budget Committee every year although in the budget of half a billion, as it was in those days or 450 million, the little Educare budget was tiny, nevertheless it stuck out that we were spending 250

thousand or thereabouts subsidizing an Educare Centre for 70 children and this was a lot of money per child. (Mr Russell)

An investigation into the funding of the Educare Centre in 1996, gave figures indicating that the request from the University General Operating Budget for the Centre in 1996 was a mere 0.027% of the total Operating Budget at that time (1996). Awareness of this incongruity led one participant to suggest a broader Machiavellian motive for drawing attention to the Educare budget:

I think it has almost been used, if I can say cynically, but the administration when it comes to Council budgets as a red-herring. They have the Educare, that takes up 90% of people's time, it's the smallest budget in the University, and the big ones slip by. (George)

These debates and the uncertainty around funds and space had a negative impact on all levels of operation of the Centre for many years, affecting staff, the Educare committee members, and parents.

...[T]he sword of Damocles has been on their head for the last 20 years.... You must remember in all the years that this was going on those poor staff lived under a sword all the time. They could never deliver, they never knew if their jobs were secure, there was chopping and changing of staff all the time, the parent, there was so much insecurity that you could never run it. (George)

and

....[F]rom my years on the Management Committee and the Advisory Committee it was a struggle, almost all the time under threat of closure or withdrawing of funds, or or just whittling away at what we had established. (Dr Jones)

In the 1990s the resources debate took on the language that globalization had introduced to higher education. The University, in common with other universities across the world, was undertaking audits and assessments, defining core business and outsourcing so-called non-core business. Arguments around the existence of the Educare Centre on campus at this time were based on 'sound' university principles of 'not the University's core business', cost saving, outsourcing, and fair labour practice, with only the occasional reference being made to subsidizing "unmarried mothers" (Dr Jones).

...when the University went through the stage of kind of cost cutting and efficiency and awareness of all those sort of things, of having to justify spending this amount of money for so many children.... So there was pressure on to either take more children which you know, cramming children into a class reduces the quality of the care, or either

outsourcing to some other organization to run and there would be no subsidy from the University as it were. (Dr Jones)

The masculine corporate language again serves to vanish the gender realities underlying the existence of the Centre, reducing it to the 'service' the University likes to see it as.

The power of the Vice Chancellor, who had been Chair of the Educare Advisory Committee, was used to quash these ongoing arguments. In 1996 he carried out an investigation into the funding of the Centre as a result of which he rejected the possibility of outsourcing the Centre. He wrote (1996):

I am of the opinion that the cost to the University is fully justified in view of what the Educare Centre offers and the opportunities which it provides for the children and their parents.

Following this in 1997 the Educare Budget was absorbed into the Properties and Services budget and the requirement for amortizing the building was dropped. Whilst Properties and Services might be seen as a non-obvious home for the Educare Centre, the incorporation of the Centre's budget into a larger budget must be seen as a major step in facilitating the Centre's incorporation into University structures.

[T]he Educare Centre has not been itemized for many years, it's just lost in the P&S line item. (Mr Russell)

It is worth noting the use of the word 'lost' here by Mr Russell. Lost has a passive, lonely feel about it, different from other possible words like 'incorporated' or 'absorbed'. It is interesting to speculate whether his description of the resolution of the financial arguments might also reflect his understanding of the resolution of the feminist arguments as they are subsumed into the masculine environment of Properties and Services.

This discussion has shown the hegemony of the corporate discourse in the University and the power of resource allocation and those who control it. Strategic control of resources was used to disempower and destabilize the Educare Centre for many years, exhausting its supporters and staff and reducing its impact on the campus. In addition, the hegemony of the resource discourse had the added effect of obscuring any theorization around gender issues that might have led to gendered

change. In the final section analyzing the dynamics around the institutionalization of the Educare Centre, I explore theme of obscuring or vanishing further, looking at the ways language and location convey meanings.

7.3.7 Vanishing

There are several ways in which the Educare Centre and its impact are vanished within the institution. These include micropolitical use of language, the structural and physical location of the Centre on the campus, and the distancing of it from the academic core of the University.

Language is used to convey the insignificance of the Centre. George talks of it as “*such a small little place*” and “*pik small*”. The institutional perception of its size (importance?) and the size of its budget contributes to this invisibility. It is described as being “*run on a shoestring*” and having “*the smallest budget in the University*”. George is proud of the perceived cost effectiveness of the Centre despite the fact that cost effectiveness reduces the care that is offered and translates into a struggle for resources and qualified staff.

We, we've you know, the staff is down to the minimum we believe we can, It's down to eight now, um we got rid of the full time nurse.

Use of words like “*minimum*”, “*small*” and “*down to*” do not convey power and impact. Invisibility is virtually guaranteed by its positioning in the strongly masculine environment of Properties and Services. In my interviews I explore this anomaly. Ms Hendricks suggests that a more appropriate affiliation might have been with a relevant academic department:

..it's just in view of probably the support in terms of if we're talking education, we would have probably have benefited if you know we had been linked to the, the um education department or psychology, or you know...

When I ask George if he feels that it is appropriate that his Department has the responsibility for the Educare Centre he gives a long justification, saying that it is a service, much like any of the others he manages. In suggesting the Human Resources (HR) department and later the Student Development and Services

Departments as possible homes he again highlights the awkwardness of the Centre in the University.

*It's it's a strange place [Properties and Services], but once again it's a service that is provided to the university community in the same way as we provide catering serv, food outlets and things like that. Um Ja it is in a sense a strange place, cause its looking after the children of staff and students, it's, you might almost say it's a HR function. You know, I, I, I, the jury's out. It it could report to us.So, I don't know, yes it it's it's it's you know, you could say HR, why HR? They're students involved, its not, you know there are as many student parents there as well then maybe it should go in the SDSD [Student Development and Services Department], why them, cause there are staff involved.
(George)*

The positioning of the Centre as a service both neutralizes and de-politicizes it. A service 'serves' the 'master', the institution, delivering on the master's terms. It is not expected to take initiative or have opinions, or to disrupt the order of things. George rather oddly tries to justify its position in the Buildings and Services Department on the basis of it being "*in a building*":

WE get involved, they're in a building, and we get involved in the building maintenance and looking after things.

He tries to see the Centre as being just like his other responsibilities but is uncomfortably aware that it is part of 'the other', different from normal University activities. The staff work "*funny hours, they work weird hours*" and have "*a weeeird sort of convolution of duties*", and he shows little understanding of the reasons for this. His desire to avoid acknowledging the 'otherness' of this unit for which he is responsible is clearly illustrated in the contrast between George's and Ms Hendricks' descriptions of improvements to the Educare facilities:

I try and use our Department's wherewithal to improve facilities there, like just recently we well not recently, about 2 years ago we put up a very expensive rubberized ground cover over the entire courtyard upstairs. That cost us a whack of money, and that was, that would never have happened if they were not in our Department, cause we happened to have had surplus money from our entire year's operation and [my boss] agreed to to use our money for that purpose, because it was one of our areas and the other was the the grass was getting constantly killed by the children and in winter they play in the mud and whatever, whatever, whatever. (George)

He does not describe this expenditure of funds as part of any planned improvement for the safety of the children but rather as being almost accidental: "*cause we*

happened to have surplus money". This assistance which cost a "whack of money" was motivated by the fact that the grass was being killed by the children, rather than the other way around. In contrast Ms Hendricks's version of this improvement suggests an ongoing struggle for resources to better the experience of children and provide quality for the paying parents.

When I started here it was a sandy play ground, it was a big sand pit. We've had parents donating money you know and we had bark chips and bark chips went home in the boxes. And you know its taken, from the time that I, its taken 8 years to get them to get a turf down. (Ms Hendricks)

The physical location of the Educare Centre on campus is also perceived to contribute to its invisibility within the broader University community. It is hidden among trees, on the periphery of the campus, with its closest neighbours being the maintenance buildings and the tennis courts.

[I]ts location is both a virtue and a problem, It is a virtue because it's a fantastic venue for an Educare Centre....but it is almost invisible, you could be on this campus without ever knowing it existed. (Mr Russell).

The distancing of the Centre from the academic core of the University also contributes towards its invisibility and several of the participants suggest that the University might have made more of the Centre's potential as a research site in fields such as social science, psychology, and education.

Interviewer: "[The Centre] also is a research site it seems, students who are training come in?"

Mr Russell: "Yes, that's happened a little, it could have happened more, um ur and you know ... that should happen more in the future."

Despite this failure to incorporate the Centre's activities into the academic core of the institution, there is a general feeling that the University has every reason to be proud of the success of the Centre.

I certainly do think that it's, it's a facility [the University] can brag about.. (Dr Jones)

The question then becomes why is this not perceived to be happening, and a number of participants comment on the lack of marketing of the Centre:

I mean one of the parents, ... he said to me, Wow, I didn't know there was an Educare Centre.... And he said to me there's just not enough marketing, we just didn't know about it and you know how many you

know, mothers and fathers may have turned down their acceptance [to work at UCT] because of the children.. (Ms Hendricks).

and

...a new staff member coming to UCT won't necessarily know of its existence. And an existing staff member who, you know, whose been going about their normal academic business won't necessarily know of its existence. (Mr Russell)

The institution's inability to showcase or market this highly successful Centre reflects the androcentric culture. It suggests a discomfort in recognizing the presence of children and parents in the conservative, academic-focused work environment. The power of this discomfort is clearly significant as it overrides any temptation to showcase the Center as an example of the University's liberal, multicultural values. It also serves to vanish the impact of its staff experiencing these values. One of the participants struggles to understand how the Educare Centre's powerful impact on University staff and their families could go unnoticed. She would have expected the focus on "*non-sexist, non-racial and all inclusive education*" to have been especially noticeable during the height of the apartheid years and to have been visibly celebrated as an outworking of liberal institutional values.

Just the whole issue of measuring the impact, it's such a difficult thing to measure.... perhaps it's not so pertinent these days but you know 10 years ago was the fact that it was actually focusing on being non-sexist, non racial and all inclusive education. And there were very few things in those days that actually set out to do that at that age. Yes and that almost has an educational effect on the whole family, um and as I say, maybe its less pertinent these days, but certainly in the past I think it impacted on more than just the child who was there.

Rather than boasting about the Centre and its impact on individuals, the hegemony of the masculine institutional culture served to vanish it and in this way was able to avoid serious engagement with the institution's gendered culture.

This discussion of the vanishing of the Educare Centre concludes my analysis of the dynamics associated with its establishment on the University campus. The analysis showed that activism was effective in raising consciousness of the need for child care on campus. In the spirit of the times, young women with a common cause spontaneously grouped together and, with the backing of an activist student organization, challenged the androcentric institution. They were able to elicit an

acceptance from the institution that, in the light of its liberal values, it had a responsibility to provide crèche facilities for students and staff. However, institutional action was only forthcoming when this moral stance was tested by local government regulations. An analysis of the institutionalization of the Centre showed how negotiation with institutional structures submitted the original gender-based change initiative to the power of entrenched political structures and hegemonies. Control of resources, complex structures and various overt and micropolitical ways of vanishing the initiative resulted in neutralizing the potential gendered impact of the Centre on the institutional culture. The Educare Center exists, but the dynamic for gender-based change around reproductive labour no longer appears to.

7.4 Summary

In this first study I examine the establishment and integration of the Educare Centre into the structures of the University using documentary and interview data covering a period of three decades. This combination of data genres was successful in illuminating the culture of the University and allowed me to trace the various dynamics stimulated by this feminist change initiative. In addition to providing insights into the institutional reaction to the Educare initiative the documentary data also captured the gendered climate at various pivotal periods in the past, and provided context, enriching the recollections of the participants.

My analysis of the gendered climate in the University showed that, despite the institution's espoused liberal values, those motivating for change had considerable difficulty in breaking through the conservative patriarchal culture. More recently there is acceptance that child care is a University responsibility, but despite this, the participants describe an institution that demonstrates a lack of in-depth understanding of the relevance of reproductive labour or how it might impact the work environment. The uncomfortable dominance of the masculine, corporate culture is evident in the disempowering administrative environment experienced on a daily basis by the Educare coordinator.

My analysis then focused on exploring the dynamics of change. The impetus for change originated not with the hierarchical leadership but among individuals with relatively little institutional power. As students, women and parents they were 'outsiders' to the hierarchical patriarchal culture, but their commitment to the academic values of the University retained them as 'insiders' who wanted to have a better chance of achieving success in the system. Stimulated by an environment of growing awareness of social inequalities and driven by what they perceived as "*pure necessity*" a group of young mothers coalesced to demand institutional recognition of the inequalities resulting from reproductive labour. They claimed authority from a strong feminist theorization around work and the socialist climate of the time. They used a dual approach to bring about change, the aggressive direct action of activists and persistent negotiation through University structures. With the intervention of external local government regulations at a critical point, these interactions resulted in the gradual institutionalization of what became known as the Educare Centre, culminating in the provision of space and funding and a niche in the institutional structure. My analysis showed that as this institutionalization process progressed, the profile of the Centre among key constituencies in the University decreased and it is now "*lost*" in the Properties and Services Department, on the periphery of the campus, providing an excellent service to a small minority of parents. Also, somewhere along the line, it would seem that the young women of today have lost the driving force of "*pure necessity*" their forbearers experienced.

The dynamics around institutionalization were explored by looking at the power wielded by committees, the use of resources to block or promote activities and the subtle vanishing of the Centre from the core business of the University. Over the years the power inherent in the University committee structure and the hegemony of the corporate discourse increasingly eroded the authority of the activists, eventually demoting their gender-based ideal to a service, answerable through a complex of structures to the master institution. In this institutional context the significant power of committees and their chairs was only exceeded by the force of external legislation (local government health and safety requirements) and the co-option of the positional power of champions such as the Registrar and the Vice Chancellor.

The power dynamics emerged when analyzing interactions around the significance of institutional structures and positioning, resources and their allocation, and the pre-eminence of the academic. These also demonstrated the effects of hegemonic discourses: the discourse of liberal multiculturalism, conservative gender discourses and androcentric discourses around the meaning of academic work. All impacted on the change initiative. Structures were used to legitimately contain, control and vanish it. Resources were used to keep it at a distance and destabilize it, and the hegemony of resources also served to deflect the debate away from gender issues. Within the academic environment the distancing of the Educare Centre from the academic core of the institution positions it as unimportant. The coordinator is disappointed and disempowered by being excluded from the academic discourse. In looking at the discourse of liberal multiculturalism, the most striking thing is how the University declines to publicly acknowledge the Centre as the embodiment of multiculturalism, despite this being the very positive experience of all who know it. This suggests a difficulty in integrating gender issues into the discourse of liberalism.

The struggle to establish a custom-built Educare Center providing for some 80 children of students and staff is certainly a success story, and even today, UCT is only one of three South African universities providing such facilities on campus. It is now acknowledged as an integral but obscure part of the University, its budget has been incorporated into that of the University, and it is acknowledged to provide quality care for the children. However the original need expressed by the students in the 1970s still remains and the evidence suggests that, despite the University's liberal expressions and the right to claim to provide childcare, with only one space available per 300 staff and students, childcare on campus remains unattainable for the majority of parents in the institution.

The analysis of the data suggests that, although the Centre itself has become a model facility, its gendered impact has been disappointing. There is little evidence of a change in the gendered culture of the institution as might be expected if there were a deep understanding of the importance and impact of reproductive labour to the functioning of the University, and the majority of young mothers remain outsiders. This supports Rao and Kelleher (2003) who found that changes that address basic

gender infrastructure in the workplace, such as child care, often leave the organizational attitudes intact. They emphasize that:

In order to make lasting changes to what an organization does, both formal rules and informal norms need to change (2000, p. 75)

and describe the achievement of this basic infrastructure as necessary but not sufficient for achieving gendered change. The danger is that the very existence of the successful Centre whose purpose and significance is downplayed by the University closes the debate on reproductive labour.

This analysis of the establishment of the Educare Centre provides a striking example of how uncomfortable activism can be neutralized through assimilation, leaving the core of the institution unchanged. Early on the institution indicated acceptance of the principle of providing childcare for staff and students. This acceptance had the effect of removing the need for activism and the nature of the power negotiation shifted into the structures of the institution, using its language and norms. The culminating declaration by the Vice Chancellor that the cost to the University of the Educare Centre was “*fully justified*” (1996) is an overt victory. However, analysis of the discourses around the un-met needs of staff and student parents suggests that a more cynical interpretation is possible and that this tiny budget was a small price to pay for removing gender from the agenda.

CHAPTER 8

8. HERS-SA

But I also sort of listened to some of the conversations in the passage and so on, and it really was for me women living in a bubble isolated from the rest of the world.. (Senior Executive)

8.1 Introduction

The second initiative I have selected as an instrument to shed light on the gendered climate of the case institution began within UCT and later moved out to become an independent non-profit organization, HERS-SA. HERS-SA was inspired by a similar programme in the United States and is aimed at increasing the numbers of women in senior leadership positions in higher education. Whereas the Educare Centre is targeted at addressing the gender challenges faced by younger women in balancing the conflict between their career development and childcare responsibilities, HERS-SA focuses on women's later career progression. The Educare Centre challenges the institution to take cognizance of women's multiple roles and the gendered division of labour. HERS-SA directly challenges the patriarchal nature of the institution, overtly aiming to replace some of the men in leadership positions with women.

As mentioned in the Chapter on Methodology, I believe that feminist qualitative research which allows me to integrate the personal with the political can be a powerful tool for examining the subtleties of institutional transformation. My intimate knowledge of the institution has already been used in the selection of my two embedded studies and the choice of the people I interviewed around the Educare Centre. In this second study personal experience of the gendered political environment forms a core around which qualitative data is collected. In some senses the HERS-SA initiative could be considered as my experiment in bringing about gendered institutional change.

I commenced work at the University of Cape Town during the 1970s when the struggle to set up an Educare Centre was taking place. I was working at UCT during the year in which the Centenary of Women at UCT was celebrated (1986). I was unaware of both of these. During the late 1990's, from a senior management position, I was able to observe the dynamics around the leadership of UCT's first (black) woman as Vice Chancellor. This led to a heightened awareness of gender as a factor in the negotiation of power within the University and awareness that (possibly unconscious) gender perceptions were limiting the access of qualified women to senior leadership positions. HERS-SA developed from this growing personal awareness. Seven years later HERS-SA has provided professional development programmes for over 800 senior women from 14 countries across Africa. My initiative in starting the HERS-SA from within UCT coincided with a time when transformation was articulated as a priority in the University, and it therefore offered the institution an opportunity to engage with gender transformation. An in-depth analysis of the institution's reaction to the initiative illuminates the gendered climate of the institution and its ability to embrace change explicitly targeted at re-gendering leadership.

This approach, which incorporates the autobiographical perspective with data obtained through qualitative analysis of research interviews, has both advantages and disadvantages. Being a relatively new initiative that has not been institutionalized, there is little in the way of documentation about HERS-SA within UCT records. This can be countered by my intimate knowledge of the establishment of the programme and documentation from my personal files. My intimate knowledge is clearly coloured by my perspective of working with UCT and I believe that this "*cultural intuition*" (Pillow p. 182) contributes to my reflexive approach. The major difficulty does not lie with incorporating my perspective but with the need to ensure that the data I include is limited to that relevant to my research topic. I am also very aware that all the participants interviewed as part of this study know of my close involvement with HERS-SA and that this awareness has influenced their responses to my questions. Again, this connectedness and the way the participants respond to it can be used to provide additional micropolitical insights around the gender climate. This was especially valuable when participants used this closeness to convey messages to me around how they feel HERS-SA should be improved,

often thereby exposing a range of personal attitudes and conflicting loyalties and providing justification for their gendered positions.

The Chapter starts with an introduction to leadership development programmes for women, such as HERS-SA. This provides a context to an autobiographical history of the development of HERS-SA. A brief discussion on the selection of participants follows. As background to the analysis of the depth interviews in the next chapter, this Chapter concludes with an introduction to each of the participants, locating them in the institution and with respect to HERS-SA.

8.2 Leadership Development Programmes for Women in Higher Education

The skewed gender distribution of women in senior positions in higher education is a world-wide phenomenon and there have been many studies exploring the possible reasons for this (see Chapter 3). These have resulted in numerous suggestions of ways to improve the gender equity situation in higher education ranging from policy interventions to programmes to train women. Clearly a prerequisite is to ensure broad access to education for young women, especially necessary in developing countries, and this needs to be supported by a critical review of institutional policies and procedures relating to recruitment, appointment and promotion. Some countries have enacted legislative support such as equal opportunity laws. However, a number of authors have noted that although there have been positive moves such as the introduction of equity policies and equal opportunity requirements over the past 15 years, in many cases these have made very little difference, particularly at the senior leadership level. A number of authors, (eg Brown, 2000, Wisker, 1996), advocate providing special developmental programmes for women. Among such programmes are the Higher Education Resources Development (HERS) Mid-America programme in the United States, the Australian Technology Network (ATN) Women's Executive Development (WEXDEV) Programme in Australia, the American Council on Education (ACE) Office of Women in Higher Education (OWHE), and more recently, HERS-SA²³ in South Africa. (A summary of these initiatives is given in

²³ HERS-SA is not an abbreviation like the American HERS but the full name of the organization.

Appendix 7.) These programmes are all centred in the belief that there is value in creating a women's-only space in which to explore professional issues in the context of the gendered power structures in higher education. There is also a focus on personal development which takes into account the distinctive socialization of women and the multiple roles that society expects of them.

Whilst leadership and hierarchical position are not necessarily synonymous as discussed in Chapter 2, the stated focus of these developmental programmes has been to get more women into senior leadership positions. The rationale for this approach recognizes the need to have visible gendered change within the patriarchal core of the institutions and the importance of role models, as originally outlined by Albert Bandura. Not only does the role model catch attention, but she provides an example for others to follow, and in so doing there is reinforcement of the role being modeled. A recent unpublished document on HERS-SA states:

HERS-SA believes that by facilitating the entry of more women into leadership positions in higher education, young people will have mentors and role models to encourage and inspire them in their future lives and careers. In this way, improving the status of women in higher education will impact the overall status of women in all levels of society. (Shackleton, 2006).

HERS-SA sees higher education as a critical environment for impacting gendered change in society. Thus by targeting patriarchy in higher education the expectation is that there will be a ripple effect as young, educated leaders move into society.

As a 'managed network' HERS-SA has three main aims:

- To develop and offer accessible professional development programmes for women working in higher education
- To empower women to take leadership positions in higher education institutions thus providing much-needed leadership role models
- To challenge institutional culture and facilitate workplace change, thereby addressing gender inequity and enabling women to participate fully at all levels of the workforce.

The HERS-SA approach thus includes several of the main approaches to achieving gender equity identified by Ely and Meyerson (2000). There is clearly a belief that there is value in 'fixing the woman' to overcome gender-specific socially imposed

limitations and in providing training to better equip women to take senior positions. In common with HERS programmes in the United States, HERS-SA brings together senior and middle level women from both the academic and administrative spheres. There is a recognition that the path to some of the most senior administrative positions is via the academic route and that women who wish to become Vice Chancellors or Deputy Vice Chancellors have to excel not only in their focused academic arena, but also need a broader understanding of the higher education environment and administration. These women targeted by HERS-SA are either in senior positions or have the ambition to move into them. Professional development is offered by role model practitioners and focuses on increasing awareness and knowledge about the broad higher education environment. This is combined with in-depth sessions with professional facilitators focusing on specific areas of personal career development. In addition, structured and informal opportunities for networking among women in higher education are facilitated both through personal interaction and the web. The total programme is aimed at increasing personal and professional confidence to enable the women to challenge the gendered climate in their institutions and break through glass ceilings they might have encountered which prevent them from entering the most senior ranks of academia. In this way HERS-SA also pushes for equal opportunities in higher education by challenging the gendered institutional culture. HERS-SA believes that as women become more confident in their abilities and skills and more knowledgeable about the higher education environment, they become more empowered to challenge its gendered nature and break through the barriers imposed by patriarchy.

Whilst there is recognition of the complexity of the interplay between gender and race in higher education in South Africa HERS-SA's primary focus is on empowering women, irrespective of race. The majority of the women participating in HERS-SA programmes are black women²⁴ and care is taken to select black women as facilitators and presenters to strengthen the power of role modeling. The programmes also provide a safe space in which women of all races can interact informally, and, particularly during the longer residential programmes, this has

²⁴ HERS-SA does not keep records of the racial demographics of programme participants.

provided opportunities to cut across historic barriers and move beyond racial stereotypes.

HERS-SA's professional development philosophy is outlined in the unpublished document "HERS-SA Lifting, Learning, Leading" (2006). (See excerpt in Appendix 7). It shows a strong radical feminist understanding of the higher education environment, believing that professional development of women requires safe spaces, that is, away from male dominated power interactions. There is also recognition of the multiple roles women play in society and the need to embrace this. An emphasis on networking speaks to the belief that by sharing experiences and information across institutions, racial groupings, countries and sectors within higher education women gain strength to challenge cultures. There is recognition that women often do not realize the power of networking and the role it plays in maintaining the patriarchal environment. Whilst cognizant of the danger of naivety around the on-going racial divisions, there is also a belief in the power of women coming together to challenge patriarchal institutional cultures.

8.3 The development of HERS-SA

This study focuses on the case institution's interaction with HERS-SA and what this reveals about the institution's gendered climate and ability to undergo gendered change. These are revealed through the interviews with the participants, but in order to provide a context it is necessary to have an appreciation of the history of the development of HERS-SA. As I was the initiator of HERS-SA the brief history outlined here is a personal reflection highlighting key moments in the development of the initiative. In this outline, I attempt to enrich my autobiographic perspective with some statistics and data from documentation in my personal files to present a chronology of events.

The impetus for developing women in leadership at UCT came from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation who had in the past contributed towards a similar programme in the United States, the HERS Mid-America programme. During a visit to the UCT campus in 1999 Mellon Vice President, Dr Pat Mc Pherson, suggested the possibility

of the Foundation providing resources to develop more women leaders in the institution. At that time I was in a senior management position in UCT and participated in this meeting as Director of the International Academic Programmes Office. From a position of ignorance of the international research and focus on the issue, but being deeply conscious of the gender inequity in my institution as evidenced by the paucity of women interacting at senior levels, I strongly supported the suggestion from the Mellon Foundation. Several months later, although it was not a part of my formal International Office responsibilities, when I realized that no-one else at UCT was responding to approaches from HERS-SA Mid-America and Mellon, I found myself coordinating a follow-up site visit to UCT. The delegation comprised two women from Mellon and the President of HERS-Mid America. I therefore participated in the delegation meetings with middle management women and selected line managers across the campus. The purpose of the visit was to assess the position of mid- to senior management women at UCT and explore whether “a training intervention from Mellon would have value to UCT, and what form this intervention might take.” (1999a). I found that the discussions both with the UCT staff²⁵ and the women from the United States illuminated previously latent impressions of the pervasiveness of gender inequality in my institution. The UCT women described UCT as lacking in role models and supportive networks for women and many of them expressed feelings of isolation, particularly those in the administrative sector who felt that their contribution was not being recognized.

In her Report to the Mellon Foundation Dr Tish Emmerson who represented the Foundation on the site visit summed up the gendered climate at UCT as follows:

The situation for women is particularly difficult. There are only seven women in senior management (above pay grade 13) and 96 women in middle management...out of a total of 256 administrators in these grades. Everyone we talked with agreed that it was important to take special steps to help women move into higher levels of administration. Our efforts to identify the major reasons for the current situation and the barriers to women's advancement yielded surprisingly diverse views. In general the male (and some female) section heads and higher administrators suggested that women had low self-esteem, that they sought "comfort zones" and preferred not to make tough decisions,and that many women, especially those in academic

²⁵ These included mid-to-senior level women managers and men with equity or professional development responsibility in the institution and University executives.

faculties, had no interest in administrative work. Women ...had a very different take on the situation. They expressed the view that men often assigned them tasks and then failed to recognize their contributions or permit them to participate in meetings relevant to their work. Many of the women we spoke with ... were quite frustrated by the limited roles they were permitted to play. (1999b.)

The concept of management training for mid- and senior level women at UCT was welcomed by all and following the visit, the Mellon Foundation invited HERS Mid-America to apply for funding to build a link with women at UCT. This funding, which was awarded for four years enabled women from UCT, and later I negotiated that it broaden its reach to other institutions in the Western Cape, to attend the HERS Mid-America Summer Institute that had been held annually at Bryn Mawr College since 1976. Funding was also provided to HERS Mid America to develop a specially designed 3-week long programme for mid- to senior level women from UCT (and later the Western Cape) which became known as the 'April Programme'. This programme was based among the women's colleges in the Boston area and is described as providing "*carefully tailored training opportunities*" structured around "*internships at selected colleges and universities.*" (HERS Mid-America, n.d.). Over the four-year period 68 South African women (23 of whom were from UCT) participated in the April Programme. The Mellon grant also enabled a delegation from HERS Mid-America to undertake follow-up visits to South Africa in 2001, 2005 and 2006.

At the suggestion of my line manager, Prof Johns (pseudonym), I was nominated by the Vice Chancellor to be one of the first group of three women to participate in the Summer Institute, an experience which exposed me to a broad network of senior women in higher education in the United States and to the feminist thinking of the organizers of the Summer Institute. There I saw the power of bringing women together, focused on higher education, and experienced the impact of hearing and meeting with role models - women who had made it into senior leadership positions. I was able to appreciate the potential for raising feminist awareness and felt that the whole experience of bringing women higher education professionals together would be valuable to emulate for women in South Africa. Accordingly, while in the USA during a meeting with Dr Pat McPherson I suggested that Mellon provide funding for a local programme for women in the Western Cape and she invited me to submit a

proposal, which I subsequently did, with the tacit support of UCT. As a result of this the Mellon Foundation provided seed funding through the University for me to organize two-day long professional development seminars for women in the Western Cape. Whilst inspired by the Summer Institute experience of bringing women together, this local initiative focused on issues of relevance to the changing South African higher education environment. Three of these seminars were held in consecutive years (2000, 2001, 2002) with 10 participants from each of the five local higher education institutions.

Until late 2001 a part-time HERS office funded by the Mellon project and comprising one part-time administrator working under my guidance was based in my Department at UCT. Although not part of my formal responsibilities, these activities were undertaken with the tacit approval of my line manager and I ensured that I included reports on my HERS activities in my regular meetings with him. During this time, besides organizing the annual seminars, our activities focused on facilitating the selection and preparation of women for the HERS Mid-America programmes in the United States. Although the donor funding was channeled through and administered by the University, the institution took little, if any, interest in my involvement in these HERS activities. No one objected to my spending UCT time on my 'women's programmes' or questioned what I was doing. Despite this, from this early stage I felt that it was important from a lobbying perspective to let the Executive Leadership of the University know that there was this initiative for women members of staff, and I ensured that invitations to nominate women for both my local seminars and the overseas professional development opportunities went to the Vice Chancellor.

A significant moment in the development of HERS-SA occurred in October 2001 when, after participating in the HERS Seminar, three women, two from another Western Cape institution, came forward to volunteer to work with HERS. Two of them who had reached extreme levels of frustration with the gendered climate in their institution followed this up by resigning their positions at the Cape Technikon, and, together with me and the administrator, they formed a part-time team of four volunteer women who met regularly to further develop what would subsequently become HERS-SA. Their actions both spoke to the need for initiatives to reach

women in higher education and provided powerful evidence of 'gender solidarity' across very diverse institutions, reinforcing my perception of the value in bringing women from across the sector together.

In 2002 we submitted another proposal to the Andrew W Mellon Foundation through the University of Cape Town, for the establishment of a *HERS Leadership Institute in the Western Cape, South Africa* ²⁶(2002a).

We propose establishing a HERS Leadership Institute in Cape Town that would develop and offer education, training and development programmes for women working in the five local Higher Education institutions. The HERS Leadership Institute aims to empower women to take leadership positions in South Africa, to challenge the institutional culture, and to facilitate workplace change.

The proposal was based on a simple analysis that showed how few women were in senior leadership positions in universities in the Western Cape (at that time only 3 of 52 identified senior positions were occupied by women) and was aimed at adapting the American HERS model of professional development for the Western Cape as a means of increasing the number of visible senior women. Use would be made of the women-only, mixed administrative and academic professional development formula, but this would be focused on locally identified areas of need (the project included conducting a needs assessment), taking into account the realities of time-availability, cost and resources in the South African situation. We felt that it was important to provide professional development and networking opportunities that brought the women from the different institutions together. An initial amount of US\$39 500 for the period July 2002 until June 2003 was awarded to UCT for our project.

The symbiotic relationship that developed between HERS-SA and UCT is worth commenting on here. Theoretically funding is a key indicator of institutionalization. However, in this instance, the funding did not come from the institution, and was not obtained using institutional fund-raising procedures. However, because of UCT's close relationship with the Mellon Foundation, and the tacit support I had been able to negotiate from my line manager, the institution was prepared to receive and manage the funding, essentially for a project over which they exercised no control

²⁶ The term "institute" was used in the virtual sense and did not imply bricks and mortar.

and which was to be spent on women from both UCT and other higher education institutions in the region.

During the 12 months of this project 17 one- to three- day-long workshops (covering topics such as leadership skills development, the changing higher education environment, financial management, the management of HIV Aids in the higher education environment, and personal career development) were designed, advertised, organized and presented reaching 162 women in the five Western Cape higher education institutions. At the invitation of the Mellon Foundation a follow-up proposal was submitted in January 2003 entitled "*The Further Development of HERS-SA*". This latter proposal was submitted through the Cape Higher Education Consortium (see below). By the middle of 2005 when the project was concluded, some 358 administrative and academic women of all races from the five Western Cape institutions had participated in these workshops.

In my earliest proposal to the Mellon Foundation I had appreciated the need to broaden the reach of HERS-SA beyond women at UCT, initially reaching women in the other four higher education institutions in the Western Cape. It became increasingly obvious that with no similar initiative in South Africa, or even in Africa, HERS-SA's vision should expand, and the four volunteer women who were developing HERS-SA decided that it would be strategic to position HERS-SA as independent of any one university. Up until the end of 2002 the University of Cape Town had served as a base for our activities by virtue of my providing an office within my Department. Whilst tacitly permitting me to carry on with my HERS-SA activities utilizing UCT resources, the University had made no effort to otherwise support or endorse my HERS-SA activities. Accordingly in 2002 we decided to become an independent non-profit organization, separate from the University of Cape Town, and began negotiations for an affiliation with the Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC). CHEC coordinates regional collaborative projects among the four (previously five) higher education institutions in the Western Cape, of which the University of Cape Town is one. Our proposal was for HERS-SA to become an

Affiliated Project in CHEC's suite of projects. HERS-SA would maintain its independence and management structure but would report annually to the CHEC Trustees as a courtesy. (2002b).

This was formalized in an agreement signed in October 2002, and early in 2003 HERS-SA moved its small part-time office from UCT to CHEC. The process of registering as a Voluntary Association, commenced early in 2003 and in September 2003 HERS-SA was registered with the Department of Social Development as a Non-profit Organization. The four part-time women comprised the Management Board of the newly registered organization. UCT leadership seemed oblivious to this move which did not elicit any response from them.

In 2003, there was a growing awareness that short workshops were not the most viable means of addressing the need for professional development of women in higher education in South Africa. Organizing multiple workshops was time consuming and expensive, and without the sponsorship that we had received from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation we did not think that they would be financially viable. We also believed that HERS-SA should not rely on foreign donor funding and that South African institutions needed to provide for the development of their women.

Whilst donor funding was very important to establish HERS-SA and possibly to fund specific projects, it was essential that HERS-SA devise a strategy to become self-sustaining as soon as possible.
(2003a)

Accordingly, using a structure modeled on the HERS Mid-America Summer Institute (see Appendix 7), the HERS-SA Academy was offered for the first time. A key decision that we took was that the fee for the Academy should be market-related so as to provide sufficient income to cover all its preparation, organization and follow-up costs, thus essentially funding HERS-SA activities for the year. We also believed that a market related fee was an important tool in raising awareness within South African higher education institutions of their responsibility to put resources towards developing their women.

The HERS-SA Academy has become HERS-SA's main activity. It is a week-long, residential, intensive professional development seminar for senior women in higher education, or women with the potential to become senior women. It has been held annually since 2003 in premises at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School

of Business²⁷. The Academy combines presentations from role model experts with workshops and, as with the Summer Institute, the networking resulting from having some 85 women together in one venue for a week is considered an essential part of the programme. (More information on the HERS-SA Academy is provided in Appendix 7). The success of the model is evident from the anonymous evaluations completed by all delegates many of whom say that the experience has been a life changing one. Respondents cite personal growth, gaining greater understanding of the gendered environment in which they work, and learning more about their professional area as valuable and leading to their feeling empowered to take on new challenges.

It has certainly been a 'life changing experience'. I am so grateful for the opportunity to have attended this Academy this past week. I have learnt something/gained insights, new information from all the speakers. The content is meaningful and valuable and participants have been inspiring in their achievements and experiences shared.

Apart from some excellent presentations, the week also stimulated some intense reflective activities within myself, rethinking my role as mother, wife and academic leader, and some serious career planning, based on the visions some of the presenters inspired in me.

I thought I was settled in my position (which I enjoy enormously) but realize that I still have much to offer, and, possibly still places to go!

I have acquired a lot of strategies to cope with being a leader in a male dominated community.

In accordance with HERS-SA's belief in the importance of involving the senior executives of the universities in the development of their women, Vice Chancellors are approached to select women for attendance at the Academy and for participation in the programmes based in the USA. After each Academy each Vice Chancellor receives a report on that year's programme; again this is part of a concerted effort to raise the profile of the development of women among higher education executives.

²⁷ The UCT Graduate School of Business has conference venues for hire to the general public. Holding the Academy there did not imply an institutional connection with UCT.

As of late 2006, 310 women, including 17 from UCT, have participated in the Academy, and the participation of 22 women in the Bryn Mawr Summer Institute has been facilitated by HERS-SA²⁸. Initially the Academy was targeted at women in higher education institutions within South Africa, but in 2003 the Carnegie Corporation of New York invited a proposal from HERS-SA to provide funding to enable women from Carnegie-supported universities in West and East Africa attend the Academy. Over a period of four years 32 senior women have been sponsored by Carnegie to attend the Academy and an additional 15 women from outside South Africa have obtained their own funding to participate in the Academy. Since 2000 American donor organizations have contributed over \$414 530 to HERS-SA activities in South Africa.

In spite of re-locating its offices to CHEC, HERS-SA has maintained a connection to the University of Cape Town, mainly through my joint responsibilities and by building up a close relationship with the Director of Human Resources Development, a woman who had participated in the April programme and is one of HERS-SA's 11 Members in terms of its constitution. The funds from the Carnegie Corporation continue to be awarded to UCT for HERS-SA activities, and UCT agreed to facilitate HERS-SA's access to government training funding through the Sector Education and Training Authority in 2004. In addition, over the years in response to invitations from HERS-SA UCT has supported the attendance of its women in all the HERS-SA programmes.

HERS-SA was my initiative, arising from a personal feminist perspective that the inherent patriarchy in the higher education environment negates the ability, skills and expertise of women increasingly as they rise in the institutional hierarchy, thus threatening the dominance of men in this pivotal arena where the country's leaders of tomorrow are educated. This personal awareness led me to interact with the institution in a completely different context from that which I was appointed to do, moving beyond the performance of my job to challenge aspects of the institutional culture. In taking this gendered political action I entered into a process of negotiation with, and on behalf of, colleagues, some of whom have subsequently become

²⁸ South African women who have participated in an Academy are invited to apply to attend the Summer Institute with Mellon Foundation sponsorship covering all costs.

participants that were interviewed for this research. In the following sections I juxtaposition this personal experience in challenging culture with the participants' gendered perspectives as articulated around HERS-SA in order to expose the gendered politics of the institution.

8.4 Rationale and selection of participants

In Chapter 3 I reviewed some of the many studies over the past 20 years that explored the reasons for the under-representation of women in senior positions in academia across the world and highlighted how this is complicated by issues of race and ethnicity in South Africa. Institutional climate emerges as a key factor (Bagilhole, 1993; Butler and Landells, 1993; Acker and Feuerverger, 1996, and others). This focus on gendered institutional culture as a barrier to the advancement of women makes the selection of the HERS-SA initiative especially relevant to my research on institutional culture and its relationship to transformation in higher education.

In looking at the dynamics of change I discuss both the overt actions and reactions stimulated by feminist action and the micropolitical interactions that inevitably accompany them. Morley (1999) has applied the theory of micropolitics to the academic environment to get a better understanding of how this culture works. She looks at how power is exercised, rather than just possessed, and looks at the numerous little daily practices and processes that combine to undermine women in the academy. In this environment she sees gendered power complicated by the strength of expert power, and in the hierarchical university structure in South Africa positional power can also be expected to influence micropolitical dynamics, particularly those around leadership development. All these factors were taken into account in selecting my participants so as to be able to provide input from a range of perspectives and positions.

Although most of the participants had participated in one or other of the HERS-SA programmes, some were selected because of their position in the University, a position from which they might reasonably be expected to be aware of leadership

development initiatives for women in the institution. Again an interview schedule was designed to explore their positioning within the University with respect to the development of women and their relation to HERS-SA. Questions about the latter covered what they knew about the establishment of HERS-SA, its integration into the institution, and its impact on the institution. In responding to questions about HERS-SA even participants who knew very little about it revealed gendered attitudes that provided valuable data on the institutional culture. Again a standard interview schedule was used as a guideline for discussion, and was amended minimally to take account of the different positions of the participants (see Appendix 3). I knew all of the selected participants as colleagues, and, initially because of the autobiographical nature of the topic, I arranged for the first four interviews to be conducted by a colleague familiar with HERS-SA. I conducted the remaining four interviews myself as it transpired that this 'distancing' of the researcher did not appear to impact the tone of the responses, with several of the participants directing comments directly to me, even though they were being interviewed by another person.

With the permission of the participants all the interviews were taped, and after transcribing, all the interviews were analyzed in the same way with the assistance of Nvivo coding. The coding schedule was drawn up to expose gendered and power interactions using readings of the transcripts to identify themes across the interviews. Factors looked at were the location of the individual within the institution and with respect to HERS-SA, his/her perspective of the gendered climate in University, their views on HERS-SA, the ways participants illuminate the meanings of gender and institutional change through interaction with HERS-SA, insights on how each individual perceives the University to be relating to HERS-SA and what opportunities UCT is accepting from HERS-SA, and an attempt is made to identify moments when individuals realized the value of communication with HERS-SA.

Perspectives	H1m	H2m	H3f	H4f	H5f	H6f	H7f	H8f	Res *
Pseudonym	Mr Kruger	Prof Johns	Jenna	Ms Hussein	Indira	Valencia	Prof Speller	Ms Venter	
At the start		x						x	x
Summer Institute								x	x
April Programme			x			x			
Academy					x			x	
Senior Leadership	x	x						x	
Has not attended a HERS-SA programme	x	x		x					
Academic career path within UCT		x					x		
Administrative career path within UCT	x		x	x	x	x		x	x
Direct EE responsibility	x		x	x	x				
Works with HERS			x						x
White ²⁹	x	x	x				x	x	x

* Researcher

Table 5. Mapping of the different intersecting perspectives of the participants and the researcher (m and f refer to male and female)

Perspectives of the participants range from those involved at the start of the initiative that would develop into HERS-SA to individuals who only encountered HERS-SA some five years later when they attended the Academy in 2005. Input is provided from women who have attended the two American based programmes and the local Academy. Participants include those whose career within UCT has been as an academic, and those who (although they have academic qualifications and some are still continuing studying) have a career in the administration. Four of the participants

²⁹ As race is an integral component of all interactions in South Africa and a key focus of transformation I believe it is valuable to indicate whether the participants belong to the apartheid-privileged white race group or not.

interviewed have direct professional responsibility in the human resources area and for employment equity and thus gender equity within the institution. Three of the participants, one of whom is a woman, hold executive leadership positions. The other participants hold senior or middle managerial positions. The researcher is on the HERS-SA Management Board and one of the participants is a Member in terms of the HERS-SA constitution. Apart from both males interviewed and one of the women, all the other interviewees have participated in one of the three major HERS-SA programmes.

8.5 The participants

The range of positionalities of the participants is relevant to their perception of gender within the University, the degree to which they feel a responsibility towards bringing about gendered change, and their attitude towards HERS-SA as a feminist initiative. It is therefore valuable to start the analysis of the interview data with a brief introduction to each person. I use the interview data to show how they position themselves in the University and to elucidate their understanding of gender and how they see themselves as gendered. The participants selected fall into two (overlapping) groups: those who because of their professional responsibilities within the University might be expected to be familiar with HERS-SA, and those who have participated in one or other HERS-SA professional development programme (the last five introduced below).

8.5.1 Professor Johns

Professor Johns has spent the majority of his working life at UCT and now holds one of the most senior leadership positions in the University. He has had no direct responsibility for equity or the development of staff and I selected him to interview as he had been my line manager over the period I was establishing HERS-SA, giving me the necessary freedom and support to undertake this initiative that had nothing to do with my official job description. This interview was conducted by a HERS-SA colleague who had not previously met Prof Johns.

As a leader, he positions himself as informed about the equity situation, both with respect to race and gender, and seems to have a genuine understanding of some of the issues. As an illustration of this, when questioned whether he believed equity was about making the numbers equal he replies:

No I don't think it is. No, um I think, I think in the institution what we, the first thing is that you want an equality of opportunity, an equality of opportunity of access and and and I am not sure that that's there still yet, and that goes not just for gender and other areas as well, when you go to selection committees, people are very comfortable with the way they have been. Talk about equity in general and and so there is a long way to go in that regard.

However, he gives no indication that he feels any direct responsibility for bringing about equity and whilst appearing supportive and understanding, Prof Johns does not present himself as a champion of women's issues.

Prof Johns recognizes the shared ground between race and gender and his attitudes are inclusive, integrating women with other people in the institution. This is demonstrated in his use of the word 'people'. Whilst he does not shy away from using the term women, he tends to rather use the word "people". A count indicates that he uses the word "woman / women" only 7 times, but uses the word "people" 17 times when he actually was referring to women. This is in stark contrast to Mr Kruger, the other male senior executive interviewed, who uses the word people twice and the word woman / women 22 times during a similar length interview. This choice of the more generic 'people' suggests that Prof Johns has a more inclusive view of the women in the organization, as against the strong 'othering' displayed by Mr Kruger.

8.5.2 Mr Kruger

Like Prof Johns, Mr Kruger holds a senior executive position in the University, one in which it could be expected that the development of staff, both men and women, would be a key area of responsibility. He is also the line manager of two of the other middle management participants interviewed as part of this study. Although he was

willing to participate in the interview it became clear that he is not very familiar with HERS-SA's activities. The interview was conducted by a colleague in HERS-SA who had met the participant on several previous occasions, being in the same professional field.

Mr Kruger rapidly positions himself as the expert in the field (*"I was lecturing on the Anglo-Gold leadership programme"*) and without being asked, spends much of the interview giving advice to HERS-SA. Within a minute of the start of the interview, in response to a question about the UCT leadership's attitude to HERS-SA he switches tack to make the completely unsolicited statement: *"And I still think HERS is not clear on where it should be going and why it exists"*. Not deterred by his lack of information about HERS-SA he goes on to suggest that it should *"refocus"* and *"re-strategize"*. At one point he says:

I don't think you guys should give up, flog yourselves to death over a [undecipherable] view. I think what should happen and maybe should have happened a year ago, is a real strategic plan ..a vision ... You need to go away for a few days with somebody who is passionate and knows how to do a proper strategic plan, a proper process, a proper SWOT analysis.

He makes assumptions that HERS-SA is about to *"give up"* and is *'flogging itself to death'*. Later he also says: *"I suppose some sort of needs analysis might be a good thing."* His assumptions that the SWOT analysis, strategic plan and needs analysis do not exist, and that HERS-SA is on the verge of giving up convey a superiority and a lack of respect for this overtly women-only organization.

In talking about women, Mr Kruger does not come across as sympathetic to, or aware of, their specific needs. He uses phrases such as *"just another bunch of women talking"*, and *"my management group which is 90% women....and they all talk all at once. Now that's the way women work"*. Women are collectivized in his mind as a rather noisy group. He broadens this attitude to include other men.

There are also downsides to [the way women do things] which they need to hear from the men. I joke with my management group which is 90% women. I have a meeting every Monday afternoon, 12 of us, I think we are 2 guys, and a lot of women, and they all talk at once. Now that's the way that women work. I know that. The guys battle with it. It's always assumed that that's okay, but its not always okay.

Despite suggesting that men battle with the way women work (even though women are “*more nurturing*” and “*more participative*”), he paints the men as the tough ones, the ones that can play ‘hard ball’ and make the nation competitive.

I think what is happening in this country is that because of the impact of women, um a almost different way of managing and leading organizations is emerging. A much more participative, much more transparent, I suppose much more of nurturing in a sense. But the along with it comes a need that you have still got to be competitive and play your hard ball. And move. Which is where the guys come in. So you can't have all those beautiful new way of working and then loose your competitive advantage as a nation, I am not talking about a corporate now, but a nation.

Mr Kruger seems to see what he believes is the women’s way of doing things as not capable of wielding the power needed to tackle major issues. He appears facetious when he talks about the more nurturing style of leadership as a “*beautiful new way of working*”, and emphasizes that in really important areas what is needed is the tough leadership which he implies only men can provide.

Clearly women’s issues are not his concern, except where he finds the voices of women dominating the discussion in his staff meetings. To Mr Kruger women are ‘the other’. They are noisy, they have a different leadership style, are mostly incapable of being tough, and in groups are threatening to men. In contrast men are portrayed as strong, silent and efficient, attributes needed for the serious situations.

8.5.3 Ms Hussein

Ms Hussein was selected for interview because of her professional responsibility in the institution associated with transformation. Although I was aware that she has had little contact with the HERS-SA programme, I believed that it was reasonable to expect that a person in her position would have insight into gender transformation and programmes to facilitate this. This was confirmed by Ms Hussein who specifically mentioned monitoring gender equity and gender as a component of institutional climate as part of her responsibilities. The interview was conducted by a HERS-SA colleague and took place in the participant's office.

Despite the interview schedule which focused on HERS-SA and its relationship with the University, Ms Hussein spent most of the time talking about her frustrations, and tended to answer questions about HERS-SA by talking about the problems of her office.

Interviewer: "Can you describe...your attitude to HERS and its activities. Do you think, do you know anything about what it does and...."

Ms Hussein: "My attitude, it its basically this, that, because I am a one person office, not one person, I shouldn't say, G is here, as in having more professional support, I am required to do so many things, and I feel quite strongly that I haven't been able to concentrate on specific things..."

and she carries on to describe some of her specific problems.

During the interview Ms Hussein willingly exposes the sense of frustration and anger she feels as she tries to do her job. This suggests a feeling of loneliness in her position with few, if any, people with whom she feels she can share her feelings. She considers herself a professional and speaks of her "*professional competence and integrity*" but feels that she is being ignored.

I am SO angry about it, um um, I am angry because I was ignored last year, and I wasn't engaged with.

This sense of powerlessness emerges with almost everything she talks about, her office, projects she wants to do, budgets. She feels her office is under capacitated, resulting in her not being able to do her job. Early in the interview when asked what decisions are taken in her office she responds in a helpless way:

Don't take decisions. Um basically what happens is, as I said, I don't even have a budget to talk about um at the moment.

Again she talks about her efforts being "*totally ignored*"

...the plan that I submitted,, and I I budgeted for it. It was totally ignored.

Ms Hussein lets me know that she is aware of gender issues in higher education:

I [sigh] I really think that academic women need to become more organized about their rights because the situation at UCT is the same throughout the country, I think in terms of where they find themselves,

level of advancement, um level of support, issues of childcare, um you know those, those, its, its across the country. And there is no organization of academic women that actually takes on these issues... And also er, its more than just a lobbying thing, its about building supports and networks which is absolutely important.

However during the interview her passion centred around her frustrations in trying to do her job at the University. She seems to be using these frustrations as an excuse for not having done anything about gender transformation, something which she mentions once in passing as being something she would like to focus more on, but it would seem in an academic rather than activist way:

I think as I get into the gender, which is what I want to do, is get more focused on this, um the gender discussion..

This lack of action around gender is emphasized by her almost complete ignorance about HERS-SA. Both are remarkable considering her professional responsibilities within the institution and suggest a climate in which gender activities have a very low priority.

8.5.4 Indira

Indira joined the University some two and a half years prior to the interview to take up a middle management position focused on employment equity and some six months prior to the interview she was one of UCT's sponsored participants in the HERS-SA Academy. She is keen to be recognized as an expert and is very aware of her position, correcting me when I suggest her title is 'Officer', saying it is 'Manager'. She tells me she is consulted by "faculties" around employment equity issues, and describes herself as referring them to "literature" and "benchmarking cases" suggesting a conscious attempt to align herself to the academic environment within which she is now working.

So basically what it means is I get faculties calling me, asking me to join them in their EE committees. Questions are asked, I would refer them to literature, I would share benchmarking cases with them, good practice examples with them, et cetera.

She claims to be "aware of my gender identity" and "understand how gender exploitation and gender ideologies work" and talks a lot about gender during the

interview, mainly in terms of numerical equity or the outworking of gender in the broader society. She lets me know that her awareness is based on her studies. However she suggests a more personal experience of gender resulting from “*personal decisions I have made in my life*”. (She does not elaborate on these.)

I got awareness on gender based on my years of study and the personal decisions I have made in my life.

Indira is more race and class conscious than any of the other participants interviewed, frequently using race to describe people – “*a coloured lady*”, “*another Indian lady*”, “*my colleague is a white person*”, “*an African woman*”, and again, “*the Indian lady*”. Whilst this categorization is part of her job, she seems to read additional meaning into each person’s actions by defining their race.

..and my colleague even says How can you say that? And my colleague is a white person
and

..the Indian lady. She said certain things that were, I found it quite offensive..

She is quite comfortable to express a blanket belief that women in the “*lower pay classes*” do not know about gender.

[There is a need for a gender awareness programme] especially for women at the lower pay classes. It would be good to raise their gender awareness. But people like myself, ... we know.

She determinedly brings gender into the discussion speaking, sometimes quite aggressively, of the broader gendered environment rather than the workplace.

Why do we choose partners who are quite sexist, to be quite honest with you? Then we bitch and moan about how bad it is for us as women. In today’s day and age, that’s not good enough.

And she challenges women to take control of their environment:

Okay, fine, we understand how patriarchy works, we understand how it unfolds in the home, but you as a woman, modern day woman today, what choice are you going to make? What personal leadership are you going to take to make sure that that ideology isn’t perpetuated.

On a number of occasions she suggests that women play a role in their exploitation and that they have the power of choice, displaying a harshly critical view of women suggesting they lack courage, make flawed decisions and display a failure to take themselves in hand:

How do you get them to hold up the mirror, and to look at where, where is their lack of courage, where is their, where are their decisions they make flawed, where do they step in and take personal leadership, where do they confront their own racism and their own sexism and their own classism? Cause we can't be sexist towards men either, I mean that's also not good.

This sympathy towards men, in contrast to her criticism of women is also displayed on other occasions:

...it was almost as if blaming men and blaming ideology, but wait a second you can only blame so much.

Her references to men are as a homogeneous group, whereas in speaking of women she tends to separate them into many different groupings: academic women, African women, Indian women, white women, coloured women, women in lower pay classes, managerial women, rural women. She uses the word woman or women 44 times during the interview and specifically notes that she works mostly with women as they tend to be “*more involved with transformation-type portfolios*”. She is outspoken in feeling that women must make liberating choices and places the responsibility for their liberation on themselves, not suggesting that changes in climate or culture might be needed. Despite railing against racism, classism and “*rankism*”, she chooses to describe women by their race and rank and is happy to make a blanket assumption that all women in lower pay classes lack gender awareness.

The overall impression created during her interview is one of misguided defensiveness coloured by a yearning to belong. At one point she says:

I will always remember my three colleagues who came with me [to the Academy]. We are a clique of our own now. We'll always be remembered as that HERS group who went on that particular year.

“*a clique of our own now*” suggests an ongoing intimacy that was not evident either during or after the Academy and the phrases “*I will always remember*” and “*we'll always be remembered*” (by whom?) have a quaint longing and wistfulness about them suggesting an experience of loneliness in her work environment. Indira gives the impression of struggling to survive in an environment which she dare not name as hostile, an environment which requires all her strength as a black woman.

8.5.5 Jenna

Jenna holds a middle management position with a responsibility in the human resources area in the University. Soon after she took up her position some five years ago, she participated in the HERS April programme and she has been a HERS-SA Member in terms of its Constitution since 2003. The interview was conducted by a HERS-SA colleague also with human resources experience with whom Jenna has worked on a number of occasions.

During the interview Jenna admits that her experience on the April programme showed her that there is *“a lot of valuable stuff we can do right here”*; however, despite development of human resources being her responsibility, she does not describe undertaking any local gender initiative besides supporting the participation of women on HERS-SA programmes. She does not see herself as changing policy or managing upwards, but limits herself to doing her job.

its my job and fortunately and fortunately I am in this role, to to not necessarily put [HERS-SA] on [the University Leadership's] radar screen, but to put it on an, a radar screen.

Jenna describes herself as having *“an insight into into women and their issues”*, and believes that it is important to promote *“the benefits of a women's only sort of initiative”*. However she clearly states that she is tired of *“activism around gender and race issues”*, this despite her admissions on other occasions that she knows of no other initiatives targeting women and no other women's only fora apart from SA WISE, an essentially non-activist support group of women in science and engineering which I initiated in the early 1990s.

Jenna finds herself in a conflicted position in the University. Without specifically talking about it, she has an awareness of the gendered environment in which she works and sees the need to *“mobilize women as a as a collective.”* Besides promoting, but not as much as she would like, HERS-SA activities, she does not describe any initiatives she has taken or been involved with to change the gendered climate on campus. She declares herself to be fatigued by the activism around gender and race, reflecting an attitude she perceives amongst the University leadership which she herself describes as apathy. In a low-key way, Jenna has

been a loyal supporter of HERS-SA activities. She participates in HERS-SA Members³⁰ meetings and provides support on the campus to ensure that women have the opportunity to participate. However, she clearly does not wish to be seen by the institution as a gender activist.

8.5.6 Ms Venter

This is Ms Venter's first job in the higher education environment, and soon after her arrival at UCT in 1999 she was one of the three senior UCT women nominated to participate in the HERS Mid-America Summer Institute at Bryn Mawr funded by the Andrew W Mellon Foundation. (I was one of the other women.) Since then she and I have had a cordial but not close relationship. She is one of the few women to hold a senior executive position in the institution which results in her working with the university leadership. She chooses to describe this as playing a role: *"Of course, I play a role in the Senior Leadership Group"*. She does not convey the impression that this gives her power within the institution when she says:

My voice is really a lone voice when, you know, up there.....I mean I think I am the longest person that has stayed the longest woman in the Senior Leadership Group.

She seems very confident when talking about the range of her responsibilities which she describes using corporate terms such as *"marketing"*, *"public relations"*, *"events management"*, *"clients"*, *"business"*, *"government"* and *"selling UCT"*. However, possibly because of her corporate background, she makes a point of letting me know that the University has been a difficult environment to adapt to.

I think ur [pause] I think that um [pause] UCT has not been easy for me, but I think if I didn't go to HERS it would have been much worse.

Ms Venter claims to be aware of *"all the gender stuff"*:

...because I am a woman and I read and so on, I I almost understand all the gender stuff.

³⁰ The HERS-SA legal constitution requires the organization to have Members who 'subscribe to the constitution' and who attend the AGM. (HERS-SA Constitution)

She talks frequently about being a woman in a patriarchal environment and strongly believes in the value of bringing women together in a safe space to empower them to “*work as a woman in a male dominated environment.*”

She shows this understanding of ‘women’s spaces’ when talking about the *Summer Institute*:

What it got right was that it took the women’s side of it you know, and that is different, we can argue it as long as you want, that its no] but it is. The experience is just different and I think er that’s what the key, that is the key, not that it’s a conference, that it teaches you skills but that it gives you as a woman that has to to work as a woman in a male dominant environment, it gives you a particular perspective. And assistance. THAT is its value.

Despite the seniority of her position, Ms Venter gave the impression of having been disempowered by the strongly male dominated culture of the University and she speaks with some passion about bringing about gendered change in the institution. However the interview makes it clear that she finds her job is too all-consuming for her to take a leadership role in this and her suggestions for bringing about this change all involve someone else (HERS-SA) taking the responsibility for action.

8.5.7 Professor Speller

I had not met Prof Speller prior to her attending the HERS-SA Academy in 2005. She had been at the University since 2001 and has served as a head of department for the past two years. One of the reasons she was selected for the interview is because she is one of the few senior academic women chosen by UCT to attend the Academy, thus having a profile strongly congruent with the aims of HERS-SA³¹. She attended the Academy during the same year as Indira and thus is able to provide another perspective on the same programme.

The interview was not a long one and Prof Speller was slow and considered in her responses. She projected an image of being detached from the topic of the discussion making remarks such as:

³¹ HERS-SA aims to get more women into Leadership positions. The route to become a Vice Chancellor or Deputy Vice Chancellor is via a strong academic career.

I also have to think back. I have got the most appalling memory
and

*I can't think of right now. I have had a brain dead two days, I have
been editing.*

In addition to her academic and departmental responsibilities in the University she is the project leader for her faculty's contribution to a major internationally funded transformation project. Whilst this is "*time consuming*" it is clearly something that she values doing. She notes with a certain wryness that the members of the transformation project team are mostly women who she feels have "*got a real contribution to make to the institution*". She contrasts these women giving their time as part of "*social responsiveness*" to the need to coerce men to participate in developmental programmes that would not benefit their academic careers. Whilst women are portrayed as making a "*real contribution*", men only become involved when the activity contributes towards promotion, something which she suggests resonates with her experience.

Was it Wits or Natal? That as far as getting senior academics to mentor, they made that then something you got rewarded for, in an equivalent of your rate for the job, so then they had lots of men volunteering to be mentors, because it was something that went towards promotion. Um and that struck a chord.

Prof Speller has written about gender impacting her academic field and clearly feels that she has a deep awareness of the issues. She describes herself as having "*done quite a bit of work in the gender area*". She talks of the institution in terms of individuals, with each being assigned a side of the gender divide. During the interview Prof Speller exuded a battle weary confidence. She gives the impression of having won control of her environment, but she is very conscious of the impact of gender discrimination and openly critical of the climate at UCT.

8.5.8 Valencia

Valencia has worked at the University for eight years in a number of positions, working her way up in the academic administration. While working she is completing a second masters degree and plans to carry on to do a PhD. She has recently

resigned from her managerial position in order to pursue further studies more intensively.

My my moving on is actually for myself. I mean I just, I mean I'm 42I mean it's a bit catastrophic financially, but I just think it is going to give me the space to think a bit more, in a dedicated way. Its difficult to think after all the academic reviews, and like late at night, after your kids are sleeping, and that's a gender thing ...

She arrived slightly late for the interview, and apologized telling me that she had to take her daughter somewhere during lunch time. In a matter-of-fact way she acknowledges that being a mother absorbs her energy, but she has now taken the decision to reduce her income generating activities to give her more time for her family and herself. She recognizes that this kind of choice that she has had to make is as a result of her being a woman, calling it a “gender thing”. I have been acquainted with Valencia since she participated in the HERS-SA April programme in 2003, an experience which seems to have had a deep impact on her. She had never been away from her family, on her own, and it was her first experience of traveling overseas.

This was the first time [sigh] possibly in my life that I was, well this was my first international experience firstly, it was the first time in my life I was away from my family and everybody on my own.

She describes the experience as “so much in my head still”, and one which gave her “just the kind of affirmation that, you know, you you can do something, you can do it.”

On several occasions she refers to the impact of gender on her life, as a wife and mother, and as a professional. She mentions wanting to share frustrations with other women, giving an example of feeling marginalized by a male colleague:

..here I've a gender issue like say with [T] in Research who has got a similar job to me, I mean I don't know how many times I've phoned [him], can we get together, can we talk about, and there I feel he just doesn't want to. I mean you know [ja] Um cause I say to him, look um these are the documents, this is what we revising, is there now an equivalent document, and then there there there's just no sharing or no synergy in that way and that makes me feel bad actually. I mean, now.

At the time of the interview Valencia was at a crossroads in her life. She had taken the decision to put her family and her personal development ahead of her secure job in an environment she found non-affirming. Her HERS-SA experience in the USA

had clearly been instrumental in providing the enabling environment which led to her making this decision and, in her words had “*turned my head completely*”.

8.6 Summary

In this Chapter I introduce the second of my feminist initiatives, HERS-SA. HERS-SA focuses specifically on increasing the number of women in visible leadership positions in higher education, thereby providing a direct challenge to the patriarchal culture of universities. HERS-SA is one of several similar initiatives in different countries that focus on professional development and networking as a means to get more women into higher education leadership. I outline the external stimulus for the development of HERS-SA and introduce its specific rationale and philosophy. I make use of my personal involvement in the establishment of HERS-SA to present a chronology of the development of HERS-SA which started within UCT, later becoming a separate not-for-profit organization, reaching hundreds of mid- to senior level women across the African continent.

The participants selected for this study range from executives to middle managers, with differing familiarity with HERS-SA and who experience gender in a variety of ways. Somewhat surprisingly only two participants (Prof Speller and Ms Venter) talk specifically of gender as an institutional power dynamic, although another (Ms Hussein) explores the possibility that gender dynamics is a contributing factor to her frustrations. To the other participants, gender is either a somewhat theoretical component of institutional transformation or a personal issue that women have to face.

In this introduction several discourses related to perceptions of women emerge. Prof Johns appears comfortable with women (as people) being an integral part of the institution. To Mr Kruger they are ‘the other’, noisy and doing things ‘differently’. Indira appears to accuse women of being responsible for their rather pathetic ‘lot’. Several of the participants identify women with transformation initiatives. Unfortunately the disempowerment and frustration felt by Ms Hussein who has responsibility around transformation suggests a negative rather than a positive

interpretation of this, suggesting a culture in which both women and transformation are diminished.

Most of the participants are careful to present themselves as having expertise of some sort, providing a revealing insight into the hegemony of the academic culture. However it is interesting to note the lack of understanding of the impact of the patriarchal environment on women's career development from the four people with professional responsibility in the areas of transformation, equity and human resources, Mr Venter, Ms Hussein, Jenna and Indira. Although most of the participants speak of having knowledge about gender discrimination in the work place, none of them describe this knowledge as leading to individual or institutional action. No evidence is provided in the interviews that either positional power or perception of the injustices of gendered power structures has stimulated any of them to take responsibility for bringing about a change in the gendered climate of the institution (despite five of the participants having participated in HERS-SA programmes!).

This introduction to HERS-SA and the participants interviewed provides the context against which the further analyses of the interview data are presented in the next Chapter. These analyses focus on the institutional culture and in particular its gendered culture as revealed through participants' perspectives around the HERS-SA initiative. The Chapter also explores the dynamics of gender-based change and the institution's response to HERS-SA.

CHAPTER 9

9. HERS-SA AND THE UNIVERSITY

9.1 Introduction

The HERS-SA initiative is a feminist challenge directed at the patriarchal nature of higher education. In particular HERS-SA aims to challenge institutions' gendered culture by increasing the number of women in senior leadership positions. HERS-SA was incubated in the case institution, the University of Cape Town. This speaks both to UCT being an environment in need of gendered change and one that allowed HERS-SA to develop. In this Chapter I analyze the data from the interviews about HERS-SA to provide insight into the institutional culture and I explore the institutional dynamics around gender-based change. In exploring the institutional culture I focus on participants' perceptions of the University and how they experience its gendered culture. In the next section on change dynamics I start by briefly looking at some of the dynamics around recent transformational change initiatives in the University as a background to carrying out an analysis of the actions and reactions associated with the initiation of HERS-SA. Although HERS-SA is a relatively recent initiative, I also explore the potential of HERS-SA for bringing about a change in the gendered culture of the University.

9.2 The University culture

The culture of the University is revealed in a number of ways in the interview data. At the micropolitical level individuals describe self-locations and inter-personal interactions which reflect their experiences of the culture. These personal interactions are described as taking place within a context of institutional structures and norms which although experienced and understood differently by the different people, give further insight into institutional culture and show the different ways in which the University manifests itself to the different participants. I first look at the

ways the participants experience the University before focusing specifically on its gendered culture. As the gendered culture is explored it becomes clear that, despite not always being labeled as gendered, gendered dynamics thread through these personal experiences. Finally, as race is an integral component of institutional culture I conclude this section with a brief look at how race is experienced and perceived by the participants.

In speaking about how they experience their work environment, the women participants surface three main themes: marginalization and loneliness, disempowerment, and pressure and struggle. Valencia uses the word 'marginalization' in attempting to describe the double impact of being both a member of the non-academic staff and a woman. She is uncomfortable in the way the institutional structures position her as an 'other' both by virtue of her gender and not being an academic.

I always found that the marginalization in the way is somehow double if you are in the PASS sector in a way. Or or not necessarily marginalization, but but the opportunities are fewer.... I am still, unaware of, but its lots of opportunities for women, it would be more so if if you are a woman academic. You could do the emerging researcher programme or, or that kind of thing.

This hegemony of the academic contributes to the experience of loneliness that is evident in both Indira and Valencia's interviews. On her return from a HERS-SA programme in the United States Valencia describes feeling "*even more alone*" and despite commencing a second Masters degree she felt that if she wanted to develop what she had learned she would have to "*take it somewhere else*". Subsequent to the interview she has left UCT to go to another higher education institution.

For the two most senior administrative women this alienation manifests in a way which reflects their levels of responsibility. Their positions in the institution suggest that they would be expected to have a degree of power and influence but their interviews show that they experience University structures and work norms as being disempowering and difficult. Ms Hussein describes herself as "*not taken seriously as a person*" and operating in a structure that allows her projects and budget to be "*totally ignored*". On several occasions she describes herself as "*fighting*" the University as she tries to do her job and she clearly sees institutional structures as

frustrating what she is trying to do. Alongside her expressed anger, she conveys a feeling of personal exhaustion and helplessness, of being in a greedy institution that takes all it can get from her and gives back nothing in return.

I, I, it's the only job I have ever worked in where, my, I feel like everything has been taken from me for it, nothing's been put back.

Ms Venter describes her working environment as “so complicated” and “so totally difficult”, conveying a feeling of struggling to survive:

...the environment we work in is so complicated and so totally difficult in a sense, and fast and furious..

She perceives this as going beyond her personal experience and describes University staff as being “too busy” and “under enormous pressure” suggesting that Ms Hussein's feeling of exhaustion is not unique.

I think that is exactly the challenge we're face at UCT because people are too busy, and apart from the fact that you are too busy, you are under enormous pressure in all sorts of other ways.

Several of the women interviewed openly express the view that women in the institution are perceived to have a difficult time. The recently appointed women in the University leadership are described as being “too busy trying to do what they do well” to care about gender issues. Struggling to survive in the male-dominated environment is exhausting. Ms Venter describes UCT women as complaining amongst themselves, “having big plans” suggesting that she believes that women as a group are unhappy yet ineffectual in getting their voices heard by those in power.

Because what we, I think we're doing is we're complain to one another or we go home to complain or whatever, but, [the Registrar] and the other DVC's does not hear me when I'm at home. It also doesn't hear you and I on the patio outside complaining or having big plans.

The contrast between the perspectives of the women in the administration described above and that of the only woman academic participant illustrates the role academic hegemony plays in confusing and alienating staff. Prof Speller, who despite having a difficult time on her arrival at the University now feels “quite comfortable” in her academic environment.

I found it was difficult to establish my credibility but having done that I feel quite comfortable.

The interviews with the male administrators give no indication that they felt uncomfortable in the University environment and none of them convey the feeling of disjuncture or disempowerment described by the administrative women. This clearly speaks to a gendered culture in which men feel accepted while women struggle for recognition.

I now focus on this gendered culture and explore how both men and women perceive the gender culture of the institution and describe experiences which illustrate gender dynamics at play within it.

Firstly, in the light of the University's lack of initiative around gender (see Chapter 5), it is striking that from their varying levels of feminist awareness, all the participants admit that the gender climate at UCT needs improvement.

We have not reached a stage of equality, I don't think, gender equality in higher education, look at the stats, look at the at the the imbalances in rank. You take the academics for example, I mean there is a huge way to go, huge way to go.. (Prof Johns)

This is described both theoretically and personally, with passion. Prof Speller conveys a deeply personal experience of the gender discrimination that she encountered on her arrival at UCT. In communicating this with me, another senior woman in the institution, she assumes a mutual understanding of the gendered climate and does not feel the need to articulate the discrimination, but emphasizes her feelings by using words such as “appalling” and “amazing”.

It was very apparent when I first arrived..... here, it was appalling. I arrived at the same time as another male professor in my department, and later, I I don't want to go into details, you know the red carpet treatment, as opposed, it was just [pause] amazing.

All of the participants appear to be aware that gender equity requires more than numerical equity suggesting an awareness of gender as a climate issue but many have difficulty in conceptualizing what that means.

In my view, UCT is still fundamentally a male society ...a white male society. And that's come out in the climate survey. You know, things like racial harassment, sexual harassment, all those sort of [indecipherable] we are not really dealing with..... (Mr Kruger)

and

I don't think it's simply numbers. We are strengthened by diversity and diversity adds to excellence, and gender diversity must add to excellence as much as racial diversity and other forms of, not in a simple numbers game, but in terms of the value of diversity in a place like this, in a University. (Prof Johns)

This difficulty in articulating any understanding of gender beyond the numbers is the second point to note. Without a proper theorization of gender meaningful action is not possible. Awareness of this contributes towards the discomfort many of the participants display in talking about gender issues. This discomfort is evident both in the way participants respond in the interviews (Mr Kruger's aggression mentioned in Chapter 8, the defensiveness of the human resources professionals) and in the way that they show gender being 'disappeared' and not taken seriously.

The interviews reveal a number of ways that gender is disappeared. In the quote above Prof Johns illustrates how by conflating gender into the rhetoric of diversity and excellence the leadership is effectively discursively disappearing gender. It is no longer a specific dynamic but part of a multi-faceted discourse, not a force but a dream. This 'disappearing' also operates at the level of micropolitical interactions. Whilst not mentioned as such by the women (i.e. it is 'disappeared') gender dynamics are a factor underlying the women's individual experiences of disempowerment and alienation described above. The women do not feel that they are taken seriously and feel under pressure to perform in an environment which is complicated by gender dynamics. It is interesting that the participants who display awareness of this disappearing all describe it as an unconscious thing, the result of naivety, thus providing an excuse for the gendered outworking of an androcentric culture:

I just find that they don't consciously do it, but because it's a gender thing, it's not important, it's not significant... (Ms Hussein).

Prof Speller illustrates the invisibility of gender as a dynamic when she describes a personal experience of how institutional practices can be gender discriminatory, while her Dean remains totally unaware of what was happening. It is an indictment of the culture of the University and its professed values that someone can reach the leadership position of Dean and be so ignorant of gender dynamics.

The most wonderful comment that was made to me, it also came to my attention that I was far more poorly paid than any other professor, and

again I was doing the comparison to a male colleague and I was saying, but you know I am far more productive and whatever. And my dear Dean, who I am very fond of, looked at me and said 'Because we had to put him on a par with the salaries of other professors'. And I said, and what am I? [Laughter] And it's a, it's a it's a complete naivety, I I I know my Dean would be mortified at the idea that he could um [not notice that it was happening] ja, ja.

Ms Hussein describes another way in which the University has been able to disappear gender by ignoring gender initiatives.

... there's the African Gender Institute as well, which is probably one of the best gender units in the country and on the continent ... but they also don't feature in our discussions.

She is the only person to mention the African Gender Institute and none of the participants refer to the University's academic programmes in gender studies or the presence of support units such as the Educare Centre. (Later in this Chapter I identify a similar dynamic of disappearance around the HERS-SA initiative.)

One participant suggests that a proper engagement with gender issues requires aggression and portrays UCT as "the enemy":

...If you want to beat the enemy, you have to beat them at their game. You can't beat them by playing your own, and it's the same thing I think with UCT and gender issues. We need to work to promote issues around gender within this system. (Ms Venter)

This action would require a level of energy was not evident in any of the interviews. A more realistic perspective is provided by Ms Hussein who believes that for gender to be taken seriously this would require an "almost impossible" change in power relations.

Interviewer: "...But as you say, firstly there has to be a strategic decision to take gender seriously."

Ms Hussein: " Absolutely. Cause it won't go anywhere if you don't. But its about changing power relations, and I have realized it's almost impossible, it it's extremely difficult."

The crushing power of the institutional dynamics around gender is evident in one of the participant's recollections of interactions with a committee around a gender issue. She goes as far as to say that the University was actively dishonest and

describes this as “*just, you know, its UCT*”, broadening the indictment to the whole University.

Interviewer: “So the [Committee] was officially lied to? [Yes]. What did you do?”

Participant: “I shook my head. And I just, you know, its UCT, I am just getting used to the way things work here.”

This interaction highlights the perceived powerlessness of the individual within institutional structures and illustrates how this leads to a disillusionment with the institution. This disillusionment is also evident when participants compare UCT’s gender climate negatively to that in other universities.

...it was stark, the contrast in the in the different engagement from Rhodes which I knew and expected to be a conservative um institution ... (Prof Speller)

Despite an expectation arising from its liberal image in the country, Prof Speller finds that comparisons served to highlight UCT’s lack of focus on gender issues:

...at one of the meetings with the different universities that has [Transformation Project] funding, Wits³² clearly have a quite a powerful programme ... and it struck me we don’t have that, we don’t have the gender focus here.

The perspectives and experiences of the gender culture of the University show the uncomfortable juxtapositioning of awareness and ignorance. People are aware that gender means more than numbers but operate within a systemic ignorance around the actual meaning and outworkings of gender. This results in a disappearing of gender at an institutional and personal level yet leaves the women feeling exhausted and confused. The institutional awareness of gender that is evident is a product of the University’s liberal discourse and is frequently bracketed with race, thus I shall look briefly at how participants reflect the range in racial consciousness on the campus during their interviews.

Three of the participants (two of whom were white and one black) do not bring race into the discussion. Three of the other participants engage with the issue of race, all presenting it as a discrimination interlinked with gender and there is an awareness that both the racial and gender climates need improving. Prof Speller is the only

³² The University of the Witwatersrand

white participant to explore issues of race linked with gender and suggests that her Faculty is party to a discursive vanishing black women. She contrasts this with the focus on black men.

So we in the [X] Faculty, we are fine on the women category, despite the fact that there are very few black women. We have done very well in hiring white women lecturers. And that, that's great. But it allows us to [relax on the other] ja, to make a policy on now employing black men.

Only one participant voices strong feelings showing that she experienced the institution as deeply gendered and racialized:

I feel this on a daily basis with my work. It, it doesn't help to be a woman, and a black woman..... (Ms Hussein)

She struggles to understand how the institution appears to go beyond race and gender to be disempowering to both men and women, black and white:

I don't know if a white woman, or a white man, would have had the same problems around budget and management and support. Um and maybe they would have, because [a white male] got frustrated, [a white female] got frustrated. Um, and so maybe its not a race and gender issue, I am not sure what it is then.

To another (black) participant, race is interpreted in terms of numbers rather than power dynamics. The two remaining white participants briefly and easily mention race in connection with gender suggesting that their comments, although very different, are in line with institutional attitudes. Jenna only mentions race when she lumps it together with gender as one of those tedious issues that she is tired of hearing about. Prof Johns only mentions race as a component of the diversity the University is seeking.

This brief look at participants' expressions around race suggest that although some are intensely aware of race, the pervasiveness of the white, male norm tends to disappear it as a power dynamic, in much the same way as gender.

In this section I have been able to use the interview data to provide insights into the culture of the University. Personal experiences reveal a deeply gendered culture which, particularly to women in the administration, translates into feeling disempowerment, alienation and exhaustion. All the participants show an

awareness of gender beyond numbers, but convey no serious theorization around the outworkings of gender in the workplace. This leads to a discomfort around gender issues which finds expression in political and micropolitical interactions. There is a tendency to attribute gendered power interactions to 'ignorance' but there is no evidence that effort is made to counter this ignorance. This results in a reinforcing reciprocal cause and effect relationship between this 'ignorance' and the disappearing of gender that is evident in leadership discourse, micropolitical interactions and the vanishing of gender initiatives. The interviews also suggest a culture in which race is disappeared.

This discussion of the institutional culture forms a background to the analysis of the dynamics around initiatives within the University aimed at achieving this diversity. Institutional dynamics reflect and express the institutional culture and thus, whilst focused on the dynamics of gender based change, the next section also continues to provide information about the institutional culture.

9.3 The dynamics of change

In looking at the Educare Centre I was able to trace the dynamics of change over a 30 year period, showing how the University reacted to the activism that characterized the 1970s and 1980s and to reveal how the long process of institutionalization eventually resulted in assimilation and the disappearing of the issue of reproductive labour. HERS-SA covers a shorter period and is set in a different social and political context in which there is considerable pressure for equity and transformation. The institution has responded to this pressure, and the interviews on the HERS-SA initiative although focused on HERS-SA also provide information on this response.

I start this section by briefly looking at perspectives of two of these institutional responses to the external pressures for transformation that were raised by some of the participants. As readings of the Vice Chancellor's Reports clearly indicate, transformation is taken to include gender-based change, thus the University's transformation initiatives can be seen as an attempt to bring about gender-based change. My brief exploration of the dynamics around these initiatives will enable me

to compare and contrast them with the dynamics around the HERS-SA initiative which form the major focus of this section.

9.3.1 Institutional Transformation Programmes

As described in Chapter 3 gender equity is articulated as a national priority and this pressure extends to higher education. Both the NPHE (Ministry of Education, 2001) and the Guidelines for the Submission of three-year Rolling Plans (Government Gazette, 2002) make institutions accountable for reporting on gender representation and submission of equity data is required by the Department of Education³³. The interviews clearly reveal awareness of the national post-apartheid requirement for equity:

I think we have got a long way to go toward you know, gender equality on this campus. (Prof Johns)

but suggest a strong focus on statistics:

When they looked at the numbers it was, it was SHOCKING how skewed our profile is in terms of both race and gender. (Indira)

When questioned several of the participants suggested that “*maybe*” it is an institutional responsibility to be active in putting gender issues on the table, and although gender inequity has been noted in Vice Chancellor’s Reports as an area requiring attention since 1985 none of the participants interviewed are aware of any “*education programme*” specifically focused on gender as had been suggested by Prof Johns to address the issue. However several of the participants are aware of two transformation initiatives which they suggested could be viewed as an example of UCT’s response to gender inequity.

The first of these is a project on institutional transformation³⁴ which is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York which Indira, who is responsible for managing it,

³³ Sadly however, it is unclear what consequences result from lack of sufficient progress with respect to their gender equity targets, and the new Funding Formula (2003), which is the key mechanism for steering HE institutions does not overtly refer to gender.

³⁴ This project, entitled “Strengthening South African University Program” funds transformation initiatives in three South African Universities, UCT, the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of KwaZulu-Natal. At UCT “[Carnegie] Corporations support will help the university

claims has a “very strong gender component”. Her description of the project emphasizes academic staff demographics with gender (by which she clearly means numbers of women) being a “very big issue”.

And in cases of urr some donor like for example, Carnegie, equity also has a very strong gender component. It's not just about getting black academics into the system. It's also about getting female academics into faculties such as urr EBE, you know where gender is a very big issue together with race.

In contrast, Prof Speller, who leads this Carnegie Transformation Project in her faculty, does not see it as a gender initiative but views it as addressing broader institutional climate issues that previous developmental programmes had not addressed. Prof Speller and Indira are the only two participants to mention the Carnegie-funded Transformation Project. The other transformation initiative mentioned by three of the participants, two of whom are members of the University executive (from whence this initiative is being driven), is the proposed new institutional transformation project called Khuluma, which was due to commence later in the year. Khuluma has been described as “a new initiative to foster debate and conversation at UCT” (UCT Monday Paper, 24 May 2006) and a strategy to

develop the qualities of diversity as assets in the university's key purposes of teaching and learning, research and social responsiveness. (Pers. Comm. Prof Hall, April, 2006).

There is no suggestion of a specific gender focus in Khuluma and, beyond these two transformational initiatives none of the participants are able to describe any existing strategy to bring about gendered change, other than “chasing numbers” which Ms Hussein describes as “totally unstrategic”.

I have been arguing this, [we] don't have any concept paper or or or clear understanding of women's position at UCT. Besides the figures, the stats. And the University has based its its employment, its transformation strategy on numbers. Chasing numbers in a in a in a way that has been totally unstrategic, I think. And I have been saying for the last two years that you, we can't do it this way. That um, if you are going to have a employment equity and plan of any quality, one really needs to understand what the specific positional problems are of the designated groups.

In talking about these initiatives, several of the participants highlight a feature of the University's approach to addressing equity issues which they believe is problematic. They suggest that the institution alienates people by placing them in "groups".

You know what I, what appeals to me about the [Carnegie] project is that the focus is on retention, on staff retention, because in the past we have had development programmes, where people are singled out into development groups, and there are all sorts of problems that happen... (Prof Speller)

Prof Speller later describes how "the lumpings together that happens" when people have been put into groups have an ability to lose subtleties related to intersecting discriminations.

The difficulties associated with the way the University culture tends to put people into groups are also raised by Ms Venter. She feels that many people would rather not be identified as part of a group, finding it "fearful or unacceptable". She suggests that women in the institution feel a pressure not to be associated with "women issues" which might label them as being part of a group.

...the culture at UCT, I think it's also a question of being labeled to belong to the group. People are very concerned.... I think individuals are different; for some individuals it doesn't matter to be identified as this or that, you know, for others it, they find it fearful or unacceptable, or whatever it is and I suppose we, with the women issues we fall in that thing. I don't know..

She highlights the othering in the institution's thinking about diversity, using the word "group". Gender is part of that unfortunate "GROUP" (said with strong emphasis) of disadvantaged people that has to be "dealt with". She describes their gender awareness as academic, and uncomfortable.

I think that in this place, at the places where I am there is certainly a a gender awareness, academically almost, I think. There is a there is a awareness of that, its politically sensitive one of those topics, and it comes under the banner of all the other things you know, previously disadvantaged groups, disability, gender, homosexuality, you know, it falls into that frame of, I don't know that that GROUP that we have to deal with....

The interviews show the complexity of displaying an overt attention to gender issues within a liberal culture that rejects what are perceived to be simplistic and disempowering categorizations, yet assigns people to such groups. . This tension no

doubt contributes towards the repeated vanishing of gender within the institution. The impression gained from the participants is that there is a vague awareness that 'the University' needs to do something about gender issues but that it is not perceived as important enough to put the effort into really engaging with them. The clear implication of this is that, despite national and donor pressure, addressing gender concerns has not been internalized by the institution as a priority.

I think there is a sensitivity that gender issues are important and ...we need to address them, but I don't experience a deep, grappling with what that really means. I have not been in a conversation in seven years, and maybe that conversation is somewhere where I am not, but in the places I am, I have not been in a conversation that interrogates directly what that issue is. And and what in UCT's behaviour and in the way we behave and in the way we talk to each other warrah warrah, all the acts that we do, how that should inform change in those areas. So maybe it is happening somewhere, I don't know but I have not, I have not seen Council consider a change strategy, to to, I have not seen a, the [Institutional Forum] do it, I have not seen committees make a a discussion around it, you know and er as I say, I don't think it's particularly that they don't, they aren't aware or they they're anti it, I think we are just in that block of things that we all know we should address at some point but it's not.. [Ms Venter]

and she does not complete the sentence.

The vanishing of gender issues that was described above as a feature of the institutional culture also appears to be a feature of the institution's programmes to address national requirements for equity. Currently the University's equity focus is subsumed into the increasingly complex discourse of 'transformation' (see Chapter 5). Considerable leadership attention has been focused on a rather nebulous concept of 'transformation'. This has resulted in creating a number of institutional structures to address transformation and transformation has been made a portfolio responsibility at executive level and a senior position of Transformation Manager has been created in addition to the existing Employment Equity Manager post. Recently the Vice Chancellor has articulated his Living Transformation Framework. However this only addresses gender in as much as gender is accepted to form part of the designated groups. One of the participants speaks with frustration of the fact that the gender issue is not taken seriously.

The Vice Chancellor has what is called the Living Transformation Report and the arms of transformation: employment equity, student equity, institutional climate, culture intervention, social responsiveness,

and then external, well that's the social responsiveness, it's about external engagement..... What, what has happened is we have an Employment Equity Manager, and we are required by legislation to develop an Employment Equity report and an Employment Equity Plan. And basically the Employment Equity Report has women as a designated group... if you are going to have a employment equity and plan of any quality, one really needs to understand what the specific positional problems are of the designated groups..... We, its been a difficult battle getting that view taken on. (Ms Hussein)

One can speculate that this frustration with the obfuscation of concerns that reflect daily experiences is felt beyond the issue of gender. The impression conveyed is that leadership is so focused on developing structures around the concept of transformation that it is not in touch with lived experiences.

This brief discussion of institutional transformation initiatives has revealed a number of tensions between the institutional culture and the processes used to effect cultural change. The first centres around the formal focusing on 'groups'. On the one hand no-one wants to belong to a 'group' (and certainly not a 'designated' one) yet on the other, an overarching approach to transformation loses the focus needed to address the realities of daily experiences. A further tension is revealed in the disjuncture between a liberal culture which elevates the individuals and free thought, and an institutional approach which aims to change the way individuals think and behave. Extreme individualism suppresses the collective identity that provides the impetus for change effectively disempowering collective action. There is also a tension between the needs of the leadership and the needs of individuals. Institutional transformation programmes are comforting to the leadership who are seen to be taking action, but at the individual level they serve to vanish specific cultural issues as evidenced by the dissatisfaction expressed by all the participants around the gendered climate. Significant is the fact that despite this dissatisfaction, the institutional culture is such that there is little evidence that anyone, even those with responsibility for gender equality has taken any focused institutional or personal initiative around gender. It was within this institutional context and a broader higher education environment that was calling for greater gender equality that the HERS-SA initiative was born.

In looking at the dynamics around the HERS-SA initiative I start by describing the experiences that led to the tempered radical approach to change and the consequent power interactions. These are revealed at the macro-, institutional level, and in the individual responses to HERS-SA as a gender-based change initiative. The individual responses show the level of naivety around gender even among those with professional responsibility for equity, and in this institutional context an analysis of micropolitical interactions reveals how the practices of key individuals within the institution operate to contain the impact of HERS-SA. Before summarizing the Chapter, as I did with the Educare Centre, I discuss HERS-SA's potential to effect gender-based change in the institution.

Discussion of the establishment of HERS-SA contrasts with the representation of the institutional transformation initiatives described above.

Interviewer: "So what do you think enabled it to get going?"

Prof Johns: "Lesley's drive. Without doubt. [One person?] Ja, I mean a lot of these programmes need a champion I mean it's it's not just Lesley but often you need somebody who has the drive to actually make sure it happens. She may well have had other people, but from my perspective what I saw, was her driving it, absolutely."

So what motivated me? I had been working in the higher education environment for 30 years, mostly in the sciences. I became increasingly aware of the absence of women from influential positions - chairs of committees, heads of department, keynote speakers. This had resulted in my initiating an organization called South African Women in Science and Engineering, SAWISE (Shackleton, 1997). From bringing scientific women together and starting to lobby around recognition of women in science, I started to develop a feminist awareness of the gendered nature of the work environment around me. The paradoxes in this environment were especially acute in the late 1990s when Dr Ramphela held the position of Vice Chancellor, the first woman Vice Chancellor the institution had had. Dr Ramphela was both a role model and an example which illustrated the difficulties faced by a woman leader in this environment. She had 'made it' in this patriarchal institution, despite having the difficult portfolio of 'Equal Opportunities' as Deputy Vice Chancellor. She was a charismatic leader who earned my respect through her courage, energy and humour.

But my personal interactions with her revealed how difficult and lonely she found her position on occasion. When she left the institution I could almost feel the collective sigh of relief from all the male executives with whom she worked.

In retrospect, I believe that the passion I showed in developing what became HERS-SA arose from a feminist anger at the unfairness of it all. Why should men, even those with mediocre abilities, move easily into senior positions, while highly competent women had to go to extreme lengths to prove themselves worthy of seniority in terms of the white male culture of the institution? I did not theorize around this. I just felt that it was unacceptably unfair and needed changing. As no one else seemed to be doing anything about it, when the opportunity was presented by the visitors from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, I seized it.

I believe that in initiating HERS-SA I acted as a 'tempered radical' as described by Meyerson and Scully (1995). Tempered radicals are individuals who identify with and are committed to their organizations, and are also committed to a cause, community or ideology that is fundamentally different from, and possibly at odds with, the dominant culture of their organization. When the Mellon opportunity came up, I was acutely aware of the gender disparity in senior leadership positions in higher education. Meyerson and Scully describe tempered radicals as those who do not neatly fit into the mainstream culture of the organization, saying that they are usually women and/or people of colour. The tempered radical is an internal change agent, very different from the 'heroic leader' concept of a change agent. I relate to their description of the tempered radical as someone who struggles with the tension between their professional and personal identities and beliefs. Like the tempered radicals they describe, I was not activist, but sought moderation, seeking to bring about change by being the 'outsider within'. I went for 'small wins', developing my gender-based initiative bit by bit, and choosing my battles. Also, like the tempered radicals, my core function in the organization had little to do with change or gender, but I saw opportunities and seized them. I seized on the initial offer of assistance from HERS in America and the offer of some funding from the Mellon Foundation, I seized on the opportunity to participate in the Summer Institute, and then asked for a small grant from Mellon to run workshops in South Africa. Small wins were achieved when the Vice Chancellor responded to requests to nominate women to attend

professional training initiatives and when women responded with such enthusiasm to HERS-SA events. A small win was achieved when the Carnegie Corporation offered to fund women from outside South Africa to the Academy, and this translated into a further small win within UCT when Carnegie requested that a draft of the proposal for the Transformation Project be amended to include reference to the HERS-SA initiative for women³⁵. Small wins are made each time a leader in higher education agrees to be a presenter at the Academy, and, especially significant to this study, on each occasion that senior executives from UCT have participated in HERS-SA events. When, and if, these small wins will eventually add up to major gendered change remains to be seen.

There is no doubt that my small-wins approach was facilitated by my familiarity with the institution and the degree of personal power that this had given me. Over the years I had worked alongside, and for, many of the people who were now in influential positions both within and outside the institution. The ability to use these connections to further my initiative gave me power that an outsider would not have had. I was strategic in selecting whom I approached for support within the institution and strategic in making visible my external connections (e.g. in donor agencies, HERS Mid America, the Department of Education). These connections served to give me a valuable level of protection from the more formal institutional structures whose inertia and conservatism threaten all change initiatives.

The individuation of the initiation of HERS-SA suggested by Prof Johns at the start of this section tells only part of the story as my tempered radical actions were supported by a global and national context that called for gender equity in higher education. These made it difficult for the University not to support a gender equity initiative and it is worth exploring these pressures further in looking at the institutional dynamics around my initiation of HERS-SA.

In 1999 UCT was in the process of adjusting to the 'new South Africa'. It could no longer claim to be the activist organization fighting apartheid depicted in the Vice Chancellor's Reports of the 1970s and 1980s. Government requirements for equity

³⁵ I was informed of this by the UCT Development Office and approached to write a paragraph on HERS-SA for insertion into the re-drafted proposal.

of both staff and students had effectively reduced institutional initiatives which had been ahead of their time, to mere compliance. Government was demanding more than the institution could deliver and provided a climate in which it was very difficult for the University leadership to prevent an initiative such as HERS-SA. However acknowledgement of the environmental pressures and the “importance” of “providing opportunities for senior women” was not seen to imply any priority among the leadership.

I think the VC is aware of HERS, as an example. He thinks it's a wonderful initiative, he thinks its great, but it doesn't bother him. (Ms Venter)

A similar disempowering of the University Leadership around equity issues is reflected in the interaction with the Andrew W Mellon Foundation. Mellon had been a strong moral and financial supporter of UCT during the long apartheid years and as such wielded considerable coercive power over the institution. It was not possible for the University Leadership to reject an offer from Mellon that would assist the University improve its equity position. Consequently Dr McPherson's offer to provide support for increasing the numbers of women in senior positions was verbally accepted during the meeting. However, no follow-up action was taken and when it transpired that a Mellon-funded delegation was about to arrive, the only person who took action was me. Without that individual action, it is easy to speculate that the institutional disinterest would have discouraged any further support.

I think the Executive could have mobilized more support, ..., by putting their weight behind the programme, going out and talking to people and so on, and so forth. (Prof Johns)

With the new alliance formed with HERS Mid-America and funding from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, I was empowered to pursue my feminist beliefs as described in Chapter 8. After many years of experience within the University I had earned the trust of key people in the leadership and, building on my familiarity with the culture, I was able to negotiate tacit support for developing what became HERS-SA. The University Leadership and my immediate superior tolerated my involvement with my “women's programme” in much the same way in which a wife is allowed to develop interests outside the home.

And also perhaps [pause] implicitly what's happening, your male executive are not are not promoting it explicitly because ag it's just a

women's programme, so there's an attitude around that, I mean that's an assumption. (Jenna)

External activities which bring credit to the husband and family, which do not cause problems or deplete household resources, and do not prevent the wife from doing her wifely duties are tolerated.

..[I]t has got to be good for the institution. We have had this successful programme and are having this successful people and people are feeling empowered, and now, that may work its way out in all sorts of subtle ways" (Prof Johns)

and

"HERS is not something which is generally discussed. It is not a programme which has caused problems... (Prof Johns)

The laissez-faire attitude of the UCT leadership towards my activities, which has been variously described as *"let's show our support and that, that's as far as it went"* (Jenna) and *"in so far as people think about it, it would be positive, but it is not something which is you know on the agenda"* (Prof Johns) certainly allowed HERS-SA to develop. There is recognition, however, that this also translated into an apathy which made action within the University structures difficult:

It was more an apathy, where the information wasn't relayed to people more than a sort of blocking it.. (Jenna)

In the light of the focus around resources in the Educare Centre initiative, it is also worth commenting on the role of resources in establishing HERS-SA.

As the initiator of HERS-SA, I played the role of 'outsider' not overtly trying *"to get into the system"* as Mr Kruger suggests HERS-SA should be doing. My long experience in the University had shown me how power was wielded through allocation of resources. Complex funding procedures assign power to institutional structures such as planning and finance committees, immediately disempowering those asking for resources. In a conscious effort not to place my gender initiative at the mercy of the androcentric hegemony I perceived in those committees I never tried to get funds for HERS-SA from UCT. From the start funding was obtained from sources that I knew to be sympathetic to gender issues (American donor agencies) and UCT was seen to be a beneficiary of these funds. This no doubt facilitated the institution allowing me to spend time on HERS-SA activities and enabled them to turn a blind eye to my use of office space and institutional facilities. This reaching

out to external financial and moral support was essential for the development of HERS-SA and served to take the sting out of the University's laissez-faire attitude.

Beyond the supportive regulatory environment (and early on I was able to get encouragement from the national Department of Education) and the support from HERS Mid-America and Mellon, the arrival of the women from a neighbouring higher education institution and their subsequent dedication to HERS-SA was critical (see Chapter 8). This evidence of need and shared feminist concern around women in higher education beyond the confines of UCT reduced the potential limiting impact of the University culture on HERS-SA. However, as HERS-SA's vision broadened to encompass the whole of South Africa, and (again encouraged and supported by a donor agency, the Carnegie Corporation) the continent of Africa, it became more and more attractive to position this feminist initiative as an independent entity alongside, rather than within, the conservative, androcentric structures of UCT.

In the paragraphs above I have described some of the institutional dynamics around the establishment of HERS-SA and how I attempted to manoeuvre within an institutional culture which I anticipated to be disinterested in gender issues. The HERS-SA approach emphasizes empowering the individual and thus would be expected to be congruent with the University's discourse of liberalism (equity and excellence). Accordingly I had not anticipated the level of confused thinking around gender and the ambivalence toward HERS-SA as an equity initiative that the individual participants show in talking about HERS-SA. This is particularly revealing as all the illustrative quotes below come from people who, having a professional responsibility in the human resources / equity area³⁶ would be expected to have understanding of gender as a power dynamic and to have theorized around ways of addressing consequent inequalities.

One of the more senior human resources professionals shows a total lack of theorization around equity initiatives. At one point s/he suggests that it is a mistake "*isolating*" women together as a group because s/he has "*a problem boxing women*" but later advocates Kuluma's approach which s/he describes as:

³⁶ In the interests of preserving confidentiality I have purposely not included the pseudonyms of the speakers below.

..you get groups, all the relevant groupings get together, in their groupings, so you have white males, and gays, and women, however you structure it, and make them talk about their issues in a transformational sense, instead of having them all together.

Another professional describes herself as “*fatigued*” by activism:

I know certainly I am quite fatigued by kind of activism around gender and race issues. So I don't think that its called for activism around that.

But later, despite this “*fatigue*” she says that she believes women need to “*mobilize*”, and “*put gender issues on the table.*” These conflicting thoughts suggest an internal struggle between conforming to an institutional culture that would like to make gender issues vanish and her personal awareness of gender as a factor. She vaguely suggests that “*there would have been benefit in some kind of women's forum*” and advocates for a space for women to discuss their workplace issues. She is happy to say that she feels confident that the University has the knowledge to address gender equity issues, but gives no hint that this knowledge is or might be put into practice. Her reference to “*time and money*” shows the pervasiveness of the resource discourse when talking about equity.

It's reinforced my thinking that says we don't need to go outside to learn stuff, and there is stuff, there's a lot of valuable stuff that we can do right here. Um and so rather spend, in terms of resources, spend the time and money more constructively doing something that is contextually based.

Another equity professional speaks about programmes to “*heighten gender awareness*” but surprisingly says that s/he does not believe such initiatives work:

I have never gotten a sense that HERS or anything for that matter, any other programme for that matter can suddenly heighten gender awareness. I have never gotten that feeling. Okay? Or that sense from people.

Despite this view, s/he repeatedly suggests that women in the “*lower managerial posts*” need their gender awareness raised and believes that programmes like HERS-SA “*would be great for them*”. Exhibiting remarkable naivety s/he conflates senior women as a single group saying that they are aware of gender issues: “*..[senior women] are already aware of these issues*”, but never suggests that they might need any form of support in the patriarchal environment. S/he even expresses

surprise that women have been prepared to attend “a female Academy in the first place”.

Besides demonstrating their discomfort in describing their HERS-SA experiences, these professionals also show lack of understanding of what HERS-SA is trying to achieve. Two of the women, despite having participated in HERS-SA programmes, suggest that HERS-SA’s focus is on gender (rather than professional development for women) and one of the human resources professionals who had attended the Academy seemed to feel a need to criticize, and among other issues complained about a perceived emphasis on the academic³⁷.

I felt that um, a lot of emphasis was placed on academic [yes] academic climbing the I mean the academic career ladder. What about PASS members of staff? That was not looked at well enough. For someone like Prof Speller who's a professor it was great for her, but what about myself? Why weren't there more debates and panel discussions on how to move up the hierarchy as a PASS member of staff?

Later, after admitting that “there were some sessions that were really good” she asks: “Why can't [the Academy] be for men and women?”, displaying a complete lack of understanding of the value of creating safe spaces for women. Mr Kruger even suggests that separating out women is threatening to men and thus should change.

I also think you should employ some men. Because I think that also is an issue. You know what I mean [yes]. 'Cos you get this image. I mean its such a convenient image for guys to attach to 'cos they are scared of it as well.

These responses reflect the level of engagement with gender issues within the formal structures of the University. They show a lack of understanding of the impact of gendered power dynamics and are evidence of the low priority assigned to gender. Whilst the participants articulate an awareness that gender is more than just numbers, there is no evidence of any institutional or personal theorization around changing gender dynamics or evidence of any understanding of feminism as a force

³⁷ Delegates to the HERS-SA Academy over the years have comprised approximately 50% academics and 50% administrative women, and the programme covers the academic and administrative environment as an interlinked whole.

in the workplace. In this environment it is very difficult to conceive of any institutional project to address gender equity either being initiated or having any success.

In addition to highlighting the absence of institutional capacity around gender, the confusion and ambivalence so evident in the comments of the professionals above speaks to an awareness that the HERS-SA initiative is challenging the institutional equity priorities for which they are responsible. It also reveals a powerlessness that individuals experience when talking about addressing gender equity. They have been positioned by the institutional structures as having responsibility for achieving equity but have no theorization from which to work. In contrast HERS-SA overtly challenges the patriarchal institution from the feminist belief that by grooming more women to take leadership positions gendered culture will be changed. Both this challenge and the lack of professional competence to counter it lead to an interpretation of HERS-SA as a threat. This ability to threaten which is reflected in discourses which attempt to contain HERS-SA assigns a degree of power to HERS-SA. These discourses of containment are discussed below and at the end of the discussion I reflect further on what they suggest about the dynamics of change.

9.3.3 Discourses of containment

By using the tempered radical / small wins approach I avoided direct confrontation with institutional structures and this permitted the passive institutional tolerance displayed to HERS-SA. In this environment micropolitical interactions are powerful in revealing the less-obvious reactions stimulated by gender-based change. Whilst expressing personal feelings these inter-personal interactions also display a power dynamic between the participants and the interviewer, me, who in their minds 'is' HERS-SA. As will be seen below, there is a dominant theme in these interactions which points to an institutional culture in which individuals feel the need to contain (rather than embrace) gender-based change. Despite making some positive remarks about HERS-SA:

[HERS-SA] seems to me a really excellent programme, quite innovative...people have come away energized and empowered.. (Prof Johns)

and

I have heard positive comments from some of the UCT women who have been there and feel quite empowered by it.. (Ms Hussein)

language is repeatedly used to reduce the impact of HERS-SA. An analysis of the interviews with almost all the participants reveals underlying discourses that attempt to contain and diminish HERS-SA. I have identified four overlapping discourses of containment. These are dismissal, diminishing, distancing, and downplaying individual experiences.

Dismissal

By associating HERS-SA with the non-academic, lower-paid sectors in the University, participants allow themselves to dismiss the initiative. Indiria would like to see HERS-SA as aimed at “*women in the lower pay classes*”. The perception that it is a programme aimed at PASS staff (“*middle to senior middle management women*” (Mr Kruger)), who in the institutional culture are seen to be of less significance than academic staff, also serves to weaken HERS-SA’s credibility in the institution. This is illustrated by Jenna’s response to a question about which constituency in the University she believes gets the most benefit from HERS-SA:

Sadly very few academics. Um its more of sort of middle management PASS women.

Ridicule is also used as a technique to dismiss HERS-SA by Mr Kruger when he suggests that HERS-SA might operate “*as a bunch of women flying a flag.*” Ms Hussein, despite admitting to having very little knowledge of the programme, describes it dismissively as “*an organizational vehicle, it’s a support and development vehicle*” which she might be prepared to work with “*if they actually start to engage with the advice that I am giving*”.

Um and I think I think since HERS exists and it’s an organizational vehicle it’s a support and development vehicle, if we, if they start to actually engage with the advice that I am giving, then we we could look at strengthening the ties and developing a strategy together. It would be very helpful. (Ms Hussein)

Diminishing

A second discourse serves to diminish HERS-SA. Prof Johns talks about it as “*a very small programme*”, this despite the fact that over 800 women from across the continent have participated in HERS-SA programmes. Participants also diminish

HERS-SA by questioning its sustainability and visibility. Interestingly Jenna is the only person who hints at the possibility that UCT might have any responsibility here.

*I think what is missing is the sustainability, umm and whether that's a HERS-SA issue or whether it's an institutional issue is another debate.
(Jenna)*

HERS-SA is diminished by the suggestions that it become more “*high profile*” as these position it as lacking in impact.

Maybe making HERS a little bit more high profile than it currently is, would be a good thing. (Prof Johns)

Similarly the calls for HERS-SA to become more activist, “*more in your face*”, (Ms Venter) imply that it is currently small and ineffective and Ms Venter feels that it needs “*to go bigger and it has to come closer*”.

Most of the participants make suggestions as to how they feel HERS-SA could be more effective, reflecting a power dynamic which attempts to position HERS-SA as deficient both as a concept and an organization. Mr Kruger is vociferous in his criticisms. He suggests that HERS-SA needs to

review itself and establish its REAL relevance, and its REAL contribution and maybe a change in direction

otherwise he suggests it is “*going to just become another bunch of women talking*”. He describes it as “*probably serving a purpose of sorts*”, and being for “*up and coming middle management women*” who he admits “*have got a lot out of it*”. However he says that HERS-SA should identify

real needs which need to be agreed with the institutions, so that the role is relevant to the mainstream operation.

Unfortunately, after having looked at the gender climate of the institution, there is a strong possibility that the patriarchal “*mainstream operation*” will not see gender as a “*real need*”. Prof Johns, possibly as he is less threatened by HERS-SA having no direct responsibility for equity, is more positive about the programme. He describes it as “*a very successful programme*” towards which he is “*very strongly supportive*” and a programme which has not caused “*problems*”. However he too feels compelled to diminish the programme by adding:

I am not sure what HERS actually is. Is it two persons and a dog?

Personalizing is also used to diminish HERS-SA. It is probably not surprising that many of the participants associate HERS-SA with me but there is also a suspicion that by personalizing it, they are effectively diminishing it.

The profile [of HERS-SA] has gone down a bit I think, maybe that's just because Lesley's playing less of a role, quite a low role [in the university?] In the university. (Mr Kruger)

Distancing

The participants provide insight into a number of ways in which powerful individuals within the institution keep HERS-SA at arms length. Prof Johns lets me know that he knows very little about it:

You know if you asked me some direct questions, how many people has HERS supported over the last year, I have no idea.

The distancing of HERS-SA from core institutional activities is demonstrated by Mr Kruger and Ms Hussein both of whom are in positions within the institution that carry a responsibility for equity and transformation. By keeping their distance they effectively limit its effect and relevance. Neither have participated in HERS-SA programmes and, despite 49 UCT women having been supported by the University over the past six years to participate in the three major HERS-SA programmes (the April Programme, the Summer Institute and the Academy) all of which required executive sign-off, neither seem to have made any real effort to find out about it. Mr Kruger is palpably negative about HERS-SA initiatives and talks about people telling him “*about what happens at those workshops*” and says:

But I also sort of listened to some of the conversations in the passage and so on, and it really was for me women living in a bubble isolated from the rest of the world.. (Mr Kruger)

Ms Hussein claims to have heard about the Academy which she calls “*..the programme, um the urr you know the big workshop that you have..*” but otherwise has no knowledge about HERS-SA and its aims.

Distancing is also evident in the enthusiasm to encourage HERS-SA to move beyond UCT. This seems to reflect a desire to move efforts for effecting gendered change away from the University.

I really liked the evaluators' suggestion about, about having um, I have forgotten what they call them now, but like constituencies in other areas, other than the Western Cape, and I know there is the Eastern Cape [chapters] Chapter. Chapters, ja. Um because I think there is something in a sustainability around that. Umm and also you know, further into Africa.... (Jenna)

Downplaying

A number of the participants downplay the impact of HERS-SA on individuals. Jenna as a professional in the human resources area claims that she personally did not gain much from her HERS-SA experience:

Personally? ...No I don't know that it has necessarily impacted me significantly. Umm I think I've, I've picked up some some kind of tools of techniques along the way, um like with any other initiative...

Interestingly two of the participants describe their female line managers as trying to discourage them from participating in the HERS-SA programmes. One participant who said that she had never been allowed to participate in any staff development since joining the University says: "*she thought that I wouldn't benefit from [the Academy]*". The other describes her current, female line manager as not being supportive of her participation in HERS-SA activities.

And then I, and also then there was this other thing cause then [my woman boss] used to participate also in HERS at at that kind of level ... and that was the other interesting dynamic because she wouldn't like invite me, sort of say look, this is the HERS thing, go along or something like that, and then, ja, so I didn't.. (Valencia)

One can speculate whether the institutional culture exerts such pressures on senior women that they feel threatened by a women subordinate participating in a programme to empower women.

Institutional response to positive individual experiences reveals how they are downplayed in a way that limits their potential impact within the University, and there is no evidence of any attempt to capitalize on the individual experience to benefit the University.

I don't feel that what should happen that because you have been to HERS therefore you should be up for promotion, or whatever the case may be, but but something happened to you. You did experience something very unique and and at least you must have a space to to to

to to um, I don't want to say it in a clichéd way, now plough back into the institution in some way.. (Valencia)

Valencia is strongly aware of how separate her HERS-SA experience is from her career at UCT:

I almost feel embarrassed that that you are so perceptive that my HERS experience is, in fact I do feel embarrassed that its so divorced from UCT, but it is how I experienced it.

She has subsequently left the University. Jenna also recognizes that the institution is not gaining from the individual experiences:

...its about how do you sustain the momentum. Because a lot of women are going for personal development and then how is that integrated back into the work, into the environment, and I don't know to what extent it really is integrated. Ummm rather than you know, women in in a their personal capacity. (Jenna)

In contrast Mr Kruger is happy to describe HERS-SA as “sort of plugged on the side”. He explains that “there isn't an interface with formal people development processes”. HERS-SA is allowed to benefit individual women but their experience is not integrated into the functioning of the institution.

It is interesting to theorize around this need to reduce the salience of gender that the discourses of containment reveal. At one level it reflects the culture in which gender is ‘disappeared’ that has been noted above. However at the same time it speaks to an awareness that gender has meaning. If gender had no meaning within the institution, individuals would not put the effort into containing an initiative to bring about gendered change. Dismissal, diminishing, distancing and downplaying suggest that the meaning assigned to gender is an uncomfortable one. The discomfort generated suggests a dynamic which gives HERS-SA power. The institution is threatened by HERS-SA’s push for gender-based change. But HERS-SA has maintained sufficient independence not to feel threatened by the institution. In the light of the opportunity this presents, in the next section I look at how effective HERS-SA has been in changing gendered institutional culture and what this study contributes to understanding the dynamics of gender-based change.

9.3.4 HERS-SA and changing gendered culture

HERS-SA was an initiative that was allowed to grow on the University campus. It has subsequently moved off-campus, but participation of UCT women in HERS-SA programmes is still supported by UCT, and UCT allows HERS-SA to raise donor funding through its structures. These speak to the benign tolerance that has characterized the leadership attitude towards this 'women's programme' but, beyond this, I now explore whether it is possible to detect any impact on the gendered culture of the institution.

HERS-SA is recognized to be the only initiative on the campus specifically focused on improving the professional environment for women. As discussed in the previous sections, the participants clearly show that UCT has had difficulty in responding to the development of HERS-SA. Its presence on campus was allowed but not encouraged. Individuals are aware that it has benefited either themselves or others in some way, but fall short of recognizing that HERS-SA might have a successful formula which could contribute to gendered change in the institution. HERS-SA is not seized upon as a resource by those responsible for bringing about gender equity, despite leadership recognition that the programme has been "*great for the institution as a whole*".

If you have got a number of people, women on this campus who are relatively senior, who are well networked and feel empowered, that is great for the institution as a whole. (Prof Johns)

It is worth noting that despite this statement from a senior member of the University leadership, HERS-SA has never received any overt recognition from the University beyond inclusion of an announcement of the HERS-SA professional development programmes in the staff training manual. The attitude of passive tolerance towards HERS-SA has enabled it to operate among the women on the campus, but not to be integrated into any part of the institution's equity commitment. By 'under-understanding' what HERS-SA is about, UCT is perpetuating its disappearing of gender as a priority on campus.

The dynamics revealed by this analysis suggest that HERS-SA has been allowed to work with women in the institution as it is perceived as being a small, low profile

initiative benefiting individual, non-academic women. As such it is not recognized as a challenge to the core patriarchal culture of the University. However analysis of micropolitical interactions suggests that HERS-SA's feminist position is experienced as a threat especially among those with institutional responsibility for equity. This suggests that despite its low profile, HERS-SA has a degree of power, and this is explored more fully later.

Whilst allowing it to develop on the campus, HERS-SA's low profile has clearly come at a cost. One of the participants passionately pleads for HERS-SA to become more activist, to challenge leadership on gender issues.

my sense is almost that if this is the vehicle that one chooses because its logical, um cause it empowers, it informs, ur its networked well so you can get all the things, if this is the vehicle one chooses, then it needs to come close to, to the powers that be in the institutions and it needs to be driven actively and and fast and furious.... people must take note of it and, there are groupings at the University that the senior Leadership Group listens to or is scared of, in in inverted commas or notes, or are sure to inform of things, um and when there is a, some voice coming from that grouping, they listen, they debate what has been said, and they take note, they want to please, they, you know they have credibility. And I think if HERS wants to go to that place it needs to come in, it needs to work actively on UCT. (Ms Venter)

It is interesting to speculate how the University would react to HERS-SA should this become its *modus operandi* on the campus. Already Mr Kruger dismisses women as noisy and sees HERS-SA as "*a bunch of women flying a flag*", Jenna aligns herself with what she perceives as the institutional culture by claiming to be "*quite fatigued by kind of activism around gender*", and Prof Johns would no-doubt encounter it as "*a problem*" and thus know more about it.

Confrontation with leadership could have shifted the power dynamic allowing the institution to use structures and policies to neutralize HERS-SA activities. The non-confrontational approach that I have taken in managing HERS-SA's interaction with the University has had the effect of reducing the power institutional structures might have had over the initiative. This 'insider', tempered radical approach is supported by the research of Meyerson and Scully (1995, p. 598):

The importance of maintaining affiliations with colleagues and friends who are more and less radical than oneself may be crucial for

tempered radicals, not only as a means to sustain their ambivalent course, but also as a way to make their struggles collective.

In the light of the HERS-SA study it is valuable to assess what might be meant by “collective” in the UCT environment. My data has shown that the University has a very individualistic culture in which individuals eschew being associated with a group. It has also shown the pressures experienced by women and suggests that men are more comfortable in the culture. I believe that these make the “*maintaining of affiliations with colleagues and friends*” even more important as male colleagues will be essential to de-‘group’ (i.e. de-stigmatize) the collective. It should also be appreciated that in an organization as conservative as UCT it will take time before there is clear evidence that my struggle has become sufficiently collective to effect gender-based change in the University.

Several questions can be raised. Firstly: in the light of the low profile HERS-SA has within the institution, and now as an external independent organization, can it effect gender-based institutional change? HERS-SA’s approach has been based on feminist theories that suggest that sex role socialization produces differences in men’s and women’s attitudes and behaviours. This results in women being disadvantaged in the work environment and able to benefit from targeted professional development (Whisker, 1996; Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Not surprisingly in establishing HERS-SA I was influenced by the liberal, equal opportunity rhetoric characteristic of Dr Ramphela’s period as Vice Chancellor. This holds that given the skills, individual women (like her) could succeed in the male dominated higher education environment. Furthermore HERS-SA programmes are aimed at empowering the individual and thus would be expected to be congruent with the individualistic culture of UCT.

At an individual level the research shows that HERS-SA has made an impact. Three of the five women who had participated in one or other of the HERS-SA programmes describe their experiences extremely positively. Valencia talks about the April programme: “*...it turned my head completely...No other meeting or workshop or just hearing about it could actually do for you*”. Prof Speller describes her experience of the Academy as “*definitely positive*” and Ms Venter says she found participation in the Summer Institute “*personally a very useful experience*” saying “*It really was a*

very important impact in my career.” Both the two senior women were open to participating in HERS-SA programmes and had positive experiences. Both show an appreciation of the HERS professional development philosophy.

HERS did give me a a a global perspective. It also gave me instant knowledge that I would have taken years to have acquired otherwise. It gave me a summary of what, what goes on in higher education. (Ms Venter)

Prof Speller says of the Academy:

I think I can remember what attracted me. It was the sense of networking aaand an empower, probably an empowering experience, um and the notion of learning about experience at the more, the higher levels of governance at the university. Um the experience of other women. So that was what I expected and I think that's very much what I got.

I would argue that it is not coincidental that the more senior women (Ms Venter and Prof Speller) were most positive about their HERS-SA experience. The HERS-SA programmes are aimed at senior women and it is my experience that these are the levels at which women become most aware of the dominance of patriarchy in the University. Their positive responses indicate that the HERS-SA experience met a need and empowered each of them in their particular work situation. Whilst each of the younger women feel that they had gained something (and in each case it was something very different) from participating in a HERS-SA programme, they do not convey the same appreciation of how what they might have gained could empower them as professional women in the University environment.

This leads to a second question as to whether these individual personal experiences can cumulatively add up to changing the gendered climate. My case study does not provide any evidence for this happening at UCT. Women are empowered, some find themselves more confident in their jobs, some leave the institution. There has been no evidence of empowered women grouping together to take collective gender action despite most of them admitting to an increased awareness of the impact of gender dynamics on their working environment. The atomized institutional culture mitigates against individuals coalescing into pressure groups. Their HERS-SA collective experience is disappeared by the institution and once again they become individuals struggling to succeed in the androcentric University. The HERS-SA

philosophy also leads to the expectation that those individuals empowered to move into positions of institutional power will use this to effect gendered change. My data also shows no evidence of this, rather suggesting an increasing power of the institutional culture to co-opt (and exhaust) and assimilate women the higher up they get in the hierarchy.

My research indicates that if HERS-SA is able to bring about gender-based change in the institution it will not be through 'empowered' individuals although these might play a role by being susceptible to that change. My analysis shows that HERS-SA's main impact on the University has been by virtue of its being an uncomfortable presence. This is revealed in the micropolitical interactions that suggest HERS-SA as an organization is perceived as a threat. The discomfort around HERS-SA raises questions about the lack of gender expertise and institutional initiatives, particularly showing up areas in the University responsible for equity.

It is worth highlighting how HERS-SA's move off the University campus has strengthened this dynamic. By becoming an independent organization, HERS-SA cannot be controlled or assimilated by UCT as happened to the Educare Centre. The University could cease to support its women participating in HERS-SA programmes, but as such it would stand out among other Universities in South African and beyond. HERS-SA is developing a growing national and international profile through participating in international gender research programmes and liaison with donors and other organizations such as the Association of Commonwealth Universities. This is providing it with an external credibility which gives it a level of expert and coercive power within the University. At the individual level the growing national and international HERS-SA network also provides support for individuals within the University who dare to challenge its gendered culture.

HERS-SA has only been addressing gendered change since 2000 and in such a short time it is difficult to assess any impact on the gendered culture of UCT. The 'small wins' approach combined with not specifically trying to integrate HERS-SA into institutional structures plays down any immediate institutional impact of change. HERS-SA activities are not reported on within the institution and are not claimed by the institution as part of their transformation initiative. However, without doubt, every

single woman who has participated in HERS-SA professional development has thought more about the trajectory of her career in the male dominated higher education environment. This has caused some women to leave higher education³⁸, but it has given many of the others the confidence to apply for and move into more senior positions. HERS-SA is grounded in the theory that there is a much greater chance of bringing about change in the gendered institutional climate as the number of women in leadership positions increases. My research suggests that there is no simple relationship between empowering individual women and effecting gender-based change. Rather it would seem that power for institutional change rests in the very presence of the organization, HERS-SA, in the higher education environment, and that this power is strengthened by external and international alliances. My analysis suggests that the constant, albeit low-profile, presence of HERS-SA has the potential to threaten the gendered institutional culture and repeatedly question assumptions. Ely and Meyerson (2000) have proposed that this is an effective route to change and experimentation, which leads an iterative process of revision that, bit by bit, results in transformation of culture.

9.4 Summary

As in my Educare Centre study I have again made use of two main genres of data in looking at HERS-SA. Being a recent initiative which has not been institutionalized, there is no archival documentation on HERS-SA within the University. Thus, utilizing a feminist approach I capitalized on my experiences as the initiator of HERS-SA to enrich the interview data with personal records, recollections and insights. This dual approach has been successful both in providing insights into the gendered culture of the University and in exploring the dynamics around gender-based change in the institution.

Discussions around HERS-SA showed that women in their various locations and from differing, sometimes overlapping, perspectives currently experience the University as disempowering. The environment is felt as pressurized and complex

³⁸ Nine of the 49 UCT women who have participated in one of the three major HERS-SA programmes have left the institution.

and there is a latent discourse of struggle to survive or fit in with the discursive misfit resulting from the patriarchal culture. Whilst all verbalized a need to improve the gendered culture of the institution, their lack of any action or involvement suggests that in the reality of their daily experience in the institution, this is not a priority. A contributing factor to this is likely to be the vanishing of gender in the institutional culture that is evident both in the institutional responses to equity requirements and in individuals' use of language in the interviews.

The participants showed considerable naivety around gender and around effecting gender-based change, even on the part of professionals who might be expected to be responsible for moving the institution towards equity. The interviews provided no evidence of any serious theorization around gender or implementing gender-based change, and proficiency in these is clearly not perceived as a requirement. This speaks to the priorities of the institution and suggests an inability to initiate or even respond to gender-based change. The misunderstanding and confusion around the HERS-SA initiative is evidence of this, as is the way in which the institutional equity programmes 'disappear' gender into the rhetoric of transformation. The institutional transformation programmes also revealed some of the complexity around effecting change in this liberal, individualistic environment. People do not want to be told how they should change their behaviour and they do not wish to be put into 'groups' or to coalesce (and be identified as part of a 'group') to take up a common cause. The institutional naivety around change in this complex environment suggests that institutionally initiated gender-based change will be extremely difficult to bring about, even if external legislative pressure were to make it a priority.

In looking at the dynamics around the formation of HERS-SA I believe that external pressure for gender equity, rather than stimulating change, provided a climate that made it politically unacceptable to be seen to be blocking gendered change initiatives, and it is in this context that HERS-SA was allowed to develop within UCT. I was able to make strategic use of institutional knowledge and personal connections to address the gender imbalances that I had become increasingly conscious of. In this process I became increasingly aware of the power conferred by independence from institutional structures and resources, and the perceived authority that comes

from an external reputation. These resulted in HERS-SA making a concerted effort to build up national and international linkages.

HERS-SA is an example of the 'tempered radical' approach to bringing about change (Meyerson and Scully, 1995). The opportunity presented by an external donor was seized, and based on decades of experience within the institution, in a low key way (as a 'wife'), I was able to negotiate institutional tolerance for a programme focused on women. The duality of my insider / outsider position was particularly powerful. As the 'insider' I was a known and trusted entity. I also had the connections mentioned above and was able to draw on years of institutional knowledge to use them strategically. At the same time, my personal experience of the constricting nature of the patriarchal institutional culture rendered me an 'outsider'. I had also experienced being the 'outsider' as a member of the administrative staff in an environment in which academic achievement is hegemonic. Being an 'outsider' drove me to push for change, being an 'insider' facilitated the process. Being an 'insider' was also important in that, unlike others, I cared enough about the institution to stay in it and to try to change it.

By using the 'small wins' approach to bringing about change overt power interactions such as those stimulated by the Educare initiative were avoided. In addition, HERS-SA's financial independence from the University reduced the institution's power over it, and also no doubt contributed both to HERS-SA's low profile in the institution and the tolerant attitude. In the HERS-SA study, at one level the University can be seen to be acceding to the coercive power of external donors within the national context of equity. At another level, it could be seen to have been relatively disempowered by the tempered radical approach. These dynamics allowed HERS-SA to quietly become established on the campus and in this context micropolitical interactions become valuable in providing insight into responses to HERS-SA as a gender-based change initiative.

Despite the tolerance and lack of any confrontation with the University structures, analysis of the interviews suggests that at a certain level HERS-SA activities are perceived as a threat to the male hegemony. This was evident in the strong discourse of containment which showed participants using language to dismiss,

diminish, distance and downplay the impact of HERS-SA. The interviews also revealed the confusion and ambiguity felt around this gender-based initiative which is particularly surprising from those who have professional responsibility in the field. There is an awareness that something ought to be done about inequitable gendered power dynamics, but nobody knows what to do or wants to be seen to be associated with a gender-based initiative. Although HERS-SA has avoided the threat of containment by moving off the University campus, this independence is felt to give HERS-SA a degree of power in working with women in UCT, as well as with women from other institutions.

My research suggests that this independence, combined with the discomfort HERS-SA invokes among those responsible for equity and change, is a possible key to bringing about gender-based change in the University. I have little evidence that the liberal feminist approach of empowering individuals will lead to gender-based change. Over the past six years a total of 158 UCT women have participated in various long and short HERS-SA professional development programmes and on their return they are re-absorbed into the masculine hegemony and a University culture which discourages group activism. The institution has allowed individuals to encounter HERS-SA as something outside of its boundaries, but it has not taken the opportunity to embrace HERS-SA as part of its transformation initiative. In contrast HERS-SA's external connections and strongly theorized approach to equity make it difficult to discount³⁹, despite the attempts at discursive containment. The dynamics revealed by my research suggest that it will be HERS-SA's professionalism and proximity as an organization with an international reputation that cause discomfort within the institution. I believe that it is this discomfort rather than the combined voices of empowered women which has the potential to initiate the process of questioning assumptions and subsequent experimentation that could result in gender-based change.

³⁹ It is interesting to note that to date seven members of the UCT executive have made one or more presentations in HERS-SA programmes.

CHAPTER 10

10. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

10. Introduction

In Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 I have presented and analyzed data on the case institution from the Vice Chancellor's Reports and the two embedded change initiatives. These have provided contextualized insights into aspects of the culture of the University of Cape Town and the dynamics around gender-based change, covering a period of nearly 30 years. In this Chapter my purpose now is to consolidate my findings with the broader body of knowledge around universities, their institutional culture, and change in the higher education environment in South Africa. In doing this I first assess the power of my methodology to provide insights into the complex concepts and processes that characterize organizational change. This is followed by a discussion on what I have learned about universities as organizations with a specific focus on their institutional culture and its power to impact change. I conclude the Chapter by analyzing the dynamics around the two gender-based change initiatives.

10.2 Assessment of Methodology

Organizational change has attracted considerable attention over the past forty years, but despite much research and major insights from management experts such as Warren Bennis, John Kotter and Peter Senge, Martin (2000, p. 450) still felt the need to lament the lack of "*a testable causal model for why change doesn't happen now and how to make positive change actually happen*". In my research I have built on the work of feminist researchers into organizational change such as Robin Ely, Debra Meyerson, Maureen Scully and others to look at the dynamics of change as focused around gender-based change and the interaction of institutional culture with the change processes. In this discussion I highlight key features of my methodology

that integrate into an innovative approach which I believe has been very successful in elucidating aspects of organizational change targeted at discriminatory gender dynamics in the higher education environment.

The first aspect of my methodology that I feel is significant is the innovative use of the case study approach. This manifests as two mutually reinforcing understandings of the case study. Firstly I treat gender-based change as a 'case study' of institutional change in the higher education environment. Institutional transformation is made up of multiple interacting changes and, as I have described earlier, is elusive and complex. I theorized that a study focusing on one facet of transformation, gender-based change, has the potential to provide insights relevant to the dynamics of broader-based social transformation such as race and class that is challenging South African higher education. Use of gender-based change as a case study has the potential to be especially powerful in revealing change dynamics as feminist action in organizations has been shown to stimulate particularly strong reactions (Cockburn, 1991). Thus a focus on gender-based change can be a powerful tool for exposing dynamics at the institutional, political level, and the personal, micropolitical level.

A second understanding of the case study can be found in my use of two particular feminist initiatives embedded within the institution to illuminate organizational culture and gender-based change dynamics. These enabled me to focus a gendered lens on two different initiatives which could then be compared and contrasted. In this way I was able to build up a multi-dimensional picture of the case institution and its ability to respond to change. I was not attempting to construct histories of the change initiatives but to use the embedded studies to provide multiple, varied, intersecting perspectives much like the exploded-view diagrams used to depict graphical complexity within the limits of two dimensions. These multiple views have been successful in exposing the complexity in the culture of the institution (Gherardi 1995, Parker, 2000) and in demonstrating its power to contain and moderate change that would challenge the dominance of white males in the South African system.

The integration of many different data types has permitted corroboration within these multiple views. This has strengthened my findings and enabled me to translate

individual personal perceptions into aspects of the institutional culture. As outlined in Chapter 4, the Vice Chancellor's Reports provided insights into the leadership discourse on change, transformation, and gender and the way in which these evolved over the years. They also provided positivist statistics and highlighted policies and changing priorities. Discourse analysis of the text and format of the Reports provided an interesting perspective on the institution's culture. These served to contextualize the studies of gender-based change which in turn integrated data from archived documentation, personal files, and transcribed depth interviews with carefully selected individuals. My positionality enabled me to further enrich these data genres with personal experiences and perspectives. The combination of these different types of data also enabled me to explore the often conflicting roles of rhetoric and emotion in organizational change by exposing the gaps between the language of the institution and "*the language of experience*" (Höpfl, 1999, p. 138).

I must acknowledge the power of my positionality. My feminist, self-reflexive approach allowed me to take advantage of this positionality and I was aware of the impact of the process of my research and its political implications. This had additional meaning as my research focused on the University of Cape Town, with which I have been associated in many capacities over the past 40 years. My familiarity with the case institution provided me with valuable institutional knowledge and experience that contributed to the 'indwelling' that Maykut and Morehouse (1994) highlight as being an essential part of qualitative research. It also facilitated the purposive selection of the change initiatives and participants, and facilitated access to participants and information. It also allowed my personal experiences to add richness to my interpretation of the data. A related aspect of my methodology is the deeper mining of this personal experience through the selection of HERS-SA as one of the initiatives studied in depth. As I initiated and led the project which arose out of my years of experience in the case institution, engaging with the research process around HERS-SA was both disturbing and enriching. In retrospect I can trace how my positionality involved me in a process of personal transformation as my research proceeded. I moved from positions of knowledge to confusion, particularly around impact of the political implications of my work. A powerful personal benefit, however, was the greater understanding I came to have of HERS-SA as an agent for feminist change.

Whilst this reflexivity can lead to confusion, I believe that by selecting a second embedded initiative to study with which I had no previous knowledge I was able to modulate and calibrate insights from my personal experience. Added dimension was provided by selecting initiatives to study which, while challenging the gendered culture of the institution, involved women at different stages of their careers. Additional triangulation was provided by analyzing the leadership discourse in the 28 Vice Chancellor's Reports. The integration and reinforcement of these three approaches - personal experience, analysis of the leadership discourse and in-depth consideration of particular feminist-inspired change initiative – has proved to be very powerful in documenting the workings of an overall institutional culture that remains highly gendered in its workings.

A large, complex organization undergoing change has dynamics operating at numerous social and political levels and I found the complexity of my subject was extremely challenging methodologically. In attempting to gain the cross-referencing Wengraf recommends in qualitative studies (2001, p. 104), and which I intuitively felt was important in exploring such complex concepts, I was keen to make use of multiple sources of data. Early on analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports provided extremely rich data, and as the data collection around the change initiatives proceeded, I realized that in order not to smother the research in data, I needed to limit my number of studies and interviews and restrict the documentation that I would access. With my qualitative approach I was not attempting to reconstruct a history of the change initiatives, but to use them as lenses through which to view aspects of institutional culture and change dynamics. I believe that the balance I achieved between density of data and triangulation of sources has been effective in addressing my Research Objectives. In the discussions below I show how it has enabled me to *“expose meanings which are both subsumed in the texts of organization and present in the texts of organization other than those privileged by the organization itself”* (Höpfl, 1999, p. 129) and gain a deeper understanding of an organization undergoing gender-based changes.

10.3 The University as an Organization

In Chapters 2 and 3 I contextualized universities as bureaucratic organizations which, although ostensibly focused on acquiring and passing on new knowledge, are also noted for their conservatism. Like other large bureaucracies they are subjected to pressures for change as a result of globalization and diversification of the work force. My research shows that the University of Cape Town is not an exception and that both globalization requirements for efficiency and accountability and national pressure for racial and gender equity have wrought changes within a basically conservative environment. In this section I pull together findings from the analysis of the Reports and the embedded studies to describe some of the specific features of UCT as an organization that contribute to its conservatism and build up a picture of its organizational culture. Key aspects of UCT that I now wish to highlight are its fragmentation of identity, the power structures, the dominance of the liberal discourse and consequent atomization, and an apparent inability to engage with diversity. Whilst all of these interact with each other and are mutually reinforcing, for clarity I discuss them separately below before proceeding to discuss the manifestation of gender within these.

Fragmentation of identity

Fragmentation of identity is noticeable at two levels: through confusion around institutional focus, and in the practice of 'othering' people and putting them into groups. As an organization the modern South African university tolerates many reasons for its existence and consequently lacks the unity of vision that characterize other kinds of organizations. The university takes on multiple roles: teaching, research, social responsibility, accountability to government and to fee-paying students, and, with the increasing corporatization inherent in the pressures of globalization, financial accountability also becomes a key performance indicator. Institutional priorities reveal contradictions. My research within UCT shows how this confusion results in the University manifesting itself differently to different individuals and how they interpret the University and its priorities differently. As an example the social responsiveness of the research being conducted within the University is a growing theme in the Reports. Contrasting this image of a caring, involved institution

with the level of support some of the women participants charged with social issues (eg Ms Hendricks and Ms Hussein) feel that they are receiving from the University suggests a degree of hypocrisy from the institution. The University Mission Statement (Appendix 5) talks about educating for life, promoting the love of learning and promoting the full development of human potential, yet Ms Hendricks and Valencia feel they have to further their studies in their free time. These and other examples point to a discord between the stated ideal and the lived experience. The resultant disconnect between rhetoric and reality is experienced by many as confusing and exhausting. Organizational change literature suggests that this lack of a shared understanding of the University's vision and purpose can be a serious impediment to institutional change.


The separation of people into groups, othering them, with each group having a distinctive place in an informal hierarchy also fragments what could have been a powerful commonality. The resultant hierarchy is constructed from formal and informal structures and inevitably leads to inter-group discrimination. Academic staff are given more credibility than administrative or professional staff and they have different conditions of service. The academics themselves are divided into hierarchical ranks which are used on a daily basis (Professor, Associate Professor, Doctor, Mr, Ms). Academic disciplines are grouped into Faculties who are in competition for resources. Excellence ratings (based on the somewhat incestuous system of peer review) of academics and research units within disciplines are celebrated further dividing them into hierarchical groups (eg A, B and C-rated researchers and sub-groups within these). Students form another distinctive group who are sometimes accorded more power than permanent support staff despite being a population that is constantly passing through the organization. The University is guided by a hierarchical committee structure comprising Council, Senate, and various Exco's, committees and sub-committees. In recent years the move to a corporate-style of management has led to new categories of elite being created, the Executive and the Senior Leadership Group, the latter being an informal advisory committee with significant power. In addition all these hierarchical groupings are superimposed on society's well-tried systems of 'othering': race and gender.

These multiple hierarchical groupings in the University lead to there being a number of potential sources of discrimination based on race, gender, whether you are a member of the academic or the administrative staff or not and at what hierarchical level, and whether you are part of the elite of senior leadership or not. Perspectives on the institutional culture emerge from the data, and these reveal impacts of these divisions. Several of the women interviewed expressed unhappiness with their work environment and it seems that this becomes significant when the individual experiences discrimination based on more than one factor. Participants who were black, female and members of the middle management levels of the administrative staff revealed extreme feelings of powerlessness and confusion. Individuals are confused as to whether their experiences are because of their colour, their gender or their relative positioning in the institution.

The white academic women interviewed describe some initial struggles related to their gender (either to achieve recognition as women or around provision of child care), but thereafter view the University as a reasonably positive working environment. They seemed confident that they were able to deal with any gender discrimination they experienced. In contrast most of the women interviewed from the administration found the University to be non-supportive and, particularly those in less senior positions, experienced it as a sometimes lonely and difficult environment in which to work. A feeling of powerlessness is evident, even from the more senior non-academic women. This feeling is not echoed by the three senior white male participants who were, in turn, more confident than the middle management white male administrator. These perspectives suggest a dominant culture which welcomes academics, even women academics, but which is less supportive of administrative staff, and especially administrative women.

The interviews suggest a hierarchy of empowerment that correlates with the groups to which the participant belongs and thus to the potential degree of discrimination they are exposed to. The table below illustrates this. The more green groups (white, male, academic, executive/leadership) a participant belongs to the more he or she is likely to feel able to control their environment. The more red groups (which are alien to the institutional culture), the less empowered and the more frustrated the participant feels. Not surprisingly there is also reasonable correlation of

empowerment with seniority (although Ms Hussein is more senior than Jenna, Valencia and Indra). The hierarchy resulting from this fragmentation is clear evidence of the powerful hegemony of the white, male norm and the way the institutional culture privileges the academic.

Feeling of empowerment	Participant	Groups to which participant belongs
High, no expression of frustration		
	Prof Johns, Mr Kruger	M, W, Ex, Ac & N Ac
	Mr Russell	M, W, Ex, N Ac
	Ms Venter	F, W, Ex, N Ac
	Profs Speller & Jennings, Dr Jones	F, W, Ac
	Jenna	F, W, Admin, N Ac
	George	M, W, Admin, N Ac
	Indira	F, B, Admin, N Ac *
	Valencia, Ms Hendricks	F, B, Admin, N Ac
Low, frustrated, unhappy	Ms Hussein	F, B, Admin, N Ac

* Despite being an administrative staff member, Indira has a PhD

Aligned with institution culture

M = male

Ex = executive, senior leadership

W = white

Ac = academic

Not favoured by institution culture

F = female

Admin = administration

B = black

N Ac = non-academic

Table 6. Correlation between cultural group and the level of empowerment as expressed in the interviews.

The table shows that individuals who are exposed to a combination of potential discriminations by being black, female, non-academic and a member of the administrative staff give the impression of being the least empowered and the most frustrated in their jobs. As the statistics from HERS-SA programmes show, rather

than try to change the institution, many of them leave⁴⁰. The fragmentation described here results in an environment in which those who are most empowered have the least motivation to change that culture and are least likely to wish for change. This results in a highly conservative institution.

Power structures

This informal fragmentation is superimposed on a strongly hierarchical formal structure with a complex of committees and procedures. I am not going to analyze these formal structures here, but it is important to draw attention to their hegemony.

As noted in Chapter 2, power is exercised through access to resources, information and support and the ability to get cooperation from others. My data shows that access to resources is a powerful institutional discourse which is widely called upon for political purposes. This results in power negotiations which take place in numerous overt and covert ways in the organization. At the formal level the hierarchical nature of the University centralizes the control of the majority of the resources in a small leadership cadre who are able to distribute them in accordance with leadership values. This is done both through the complex of committees and procedures, and by individuals. The committees are governed by written and unwritten rules and, as my Educare Centre study has shown, the pervasive University committee structure is used both as an arena for political interaction and a political tool.

Individual power comes from designated authority, but, as has been noted by authors such as Morley and Nicolson, networks play a significant role in access to power and resources in the collegial university environment. Individuals who are members of the 'in crowd' (eg white, male, senior executives or academics) have access to more power through their networks which include the senior leadership of the University. These individuals are seen to have weight and be able to influence outcomes and obtain resources and can be co-opted to become forces for change.

⁴⁰ The statistics from the HERS-SA programme also show that nine of the 49 mid- to senior level UCT women who participated in HERS programmes in the USA since 2000 have subsequently left the University, ie 18.3%.

Unlike other types of organization, expert power (academic hegemony) is a factor in the University environment which also provides access to influence and resources. However, as discussed above, especially when combined with gendered and racial power relations at the micropolitical level, expert power can become highly disempowering to those who can be designated as 'the other'. The fragmented nature of the University as an organization makes it especially vulnerable to the exercise of micropolitical power interactions. These are reflected in the gap between the institutional rhetoric and the reality experienced by individuals and in the gendered power interactions (discussed in more detail below). Power is a key factor in bringing about or frustrating change, and my data shows how, despite leadership rhetoric indicating intent, pervasive micropolitical interactions can serve to diminish that intent.

It is also relevant to consider the changing position of the University in the broader higher education and political environment. During the apartheid years the historically-white liberal universities in South Africa such as UCT wielded a certain power given them by their international connections and access to resources. The combination of the requirements for accountability from public higher education brought on by globalization and the removal of their privileged position by the advent of the South African democracy, has served to disempower universities such as UCT. This disempowerment is reflected in the insecurity around the constant striving for 'transformation'. The insecurity is compounded by the intertwining of corporatization with transformation, and my data has shown how this can reduce transformation to positivist countings of demographics, raising funds for under-theorized programmes and the re-writing of policies with no real engagement with social and cultural realities.

Liberalism and atomization

The powerful liberal discourses around equity and diversity within the University that were highlighted by my data extend the fragmentation discussed above to an even greater degree and this serves to isolate individuals within the organization. Liberalism privileges the rights and opinions of individuals and, in the academic

environment which is structured to revere individual achievement, it results in an atomization which is variously experienced by different people in the institution. Some individuals experience alienation and confusion, others are seduced into striving for acceptance in the academic tender of the institution. This atomization reduces the power of the majority of individuals and at the same time suppresses collective action as people are encouraged to value their individuality and do not want to be associated with groups.

The rhetoric of equal opportunities, the belief that success is controlled by individual effort, and the celebration of individuals are all part of this culture of individualization. The strong academic hierarchical structure of the research university (which UCT claims to be) privileges certain individuals who achieve academic success and enables them to move into positions of personal power, reinforcing the system. As an organization the liberal university is thus tolerant of mavericks and outsiders, but is controlled by selected individuals who replicate its values and are not challenged by the atomized proletariat. I suggest that the combination of the institution's liberal values with the privileging of the individual academic is a significant factor in the University's conservatism. This clearly has implications for bringing about any change to the dominant culture.

It is interesting to note the recent challenge to the University's liberal self-image. In the 1970s and 1980s the liberal discourse of equity and academic freedom found expression in taking a public stance against the policies of the South African government, and the rhetoric of the early Vice Chancellor's Reports represents UCT as a liberal warrior, fighting the injustices of apartheid. The resultant change in the demography of the student body is an undoubted success but it must be noted that increasing the proportion of black and women students represented a minimal threat to the dominant leadership. In the new democratic South Africa, post-1994, external pressures for social transformation appear to confuse the liberal discourse. The University has lost control of the liberal initiative. Pressure from government and civil society is resulting in institutional rhetoric and structures to address transformation, but my research suggests that there is little institutional capacity or expertise to support these.

Engagement with diversity

This lack of capacity is related to the striking lack of awareness of the day to day impact of the institution's gender or racial climate on individuals that is evident in my data. Race is mentioned as a possible discriminatory factor by two of the black administrative women, but interestingly not by two others. There is little evidence that the leadership appreciates the need to portray the University as a gender-sensitive work environment. My data suggests a culture of 'blindness' that has remained unchanged for decades despite the bouts of activism. It would seem that the atomization and demanding working norms of the institution encourage people to focus on their jobs leaving them with little time or energy for becoming active in broader cultural issues. This is compounded by lack of expertise or leadership around diversity issues. Those responsible for managing human resources show little deep understanding of the impact of cultural/gender differences on individuals or the work environment and do not appear to be required to have expertise in these areas. (This is discussed in more detail below in relation to gender.)

Taylor Cox (1993) described institutions that ignored or tolerated diversity as "Plural" organizations. As a whole UCT could thus be described as a "Plural" organization and, congruent with Cox's definition, it exhibits partial structural integration and limited informal integration. It is interesting to note that Cox pointed out that inter-group conflict is a greater possibility with this kind of organizational approach to diversity than in the case of fully integrated 'multicultural' organizations or 'monolithic' organizations. However, with respect to Cox's definitions my data suggests a disconnect between the structure of the broader University community and the leadership which appears to be strongly assimilative and more akin to his "Monolithic" organization. Despite recent additions of women and black people to the leadership cadre, there is little evidence that this has impacted the white male hegemony which is discussed below. Thomas and Ely (1996) point out how, by encouraging diverse peoples to blend in, this results in assimilation and little change to the organization.

A similar disconnect within the organization is also evident between the leadership rhetoric around diversity and the reality experienced by individuals. This parallels the

findings of Deem, Morley and Tlili (2005) in their study of universities in the United Kingdom. Rhetoric and policy speak of constantly striving for change and transformation but give little evidence of deep cultural change being effected. From the early 1990s people are appointed and committees set up to facilitate transformation, yet analysis of subsequent Reports shows how limited their impact has been, and nearly 15 years later, new positions are still being created and new programmes initiated to bring about the long sought-after transformation. The policies articulate what is being strived for, but actions throw doubt on the deep commitment necessary for change. This inconsistency is well illustrated by the Educare Centre. It is difficult to understand how an institution espousing liberal ideals and with a powerful Mission Statement focusing on educating for life and addressing society's challenges (including all forms of discrimination) can be so unseeing as to appear oblivious of the achievement of the Centre. The Educare Centre, a microcosm of diversity, that seeks to alleviate the constraints experienced by academics who are primary carers for children would thus appear to provide a key example of what the institution is aiming for in its quest for transformation (non-discriminatory, educational, affirming, innovative, gender-aware), yet the Centre still remains on the periphery of the University.

Implications

The University of Cape Town manifests as a complex organization which is the site of contesting cultures and purposes. As such it is a distinctive organization, sharing similarities with universities worldwide, but also subjected to pressures related to its history and position. Counter to expectation, my research indicates that UCT's liberal positioning has resulted in an institutional inertia which is experienced with frustration and exhaustion particularly by those who do not fit the dominant profile. As liberal thought, subscription to the concept of academic freedom, and a culture of individualization are features of most universities, my research suggests that the atomization I encountered at UCT could be a contributing factor to the conservatism of universities noted in the literature. This clearly has implications for bringing about change and transformation in the higher education environment.

My research has also shown how UCT as 'the University' manifests itself in many different ways to people in different positions in the organization. This is exacerbated by the finding that despite the culture of individualization, there is a powerful process of 'othering' within the organization, whereby people are put into groups. These groupings moderate power negotiations and form the framework around which the organization's culture is determined. Parker (2000, p. 233) has described organizational culture as "*a continually contested process of making claims of difference within and between groups of people who are formally constituted as members of a defined group*". These negotiations and a resultant dominant culture emerge very clearly from my research. The dominant group who define the organization's culture, remain the white, male, academics, with those who rise to senior positions being particularly influential. With increasing workforce diversity in the University, this has resulted a disconnect between the leadership and the rest of the organization. Transformative action to change this culture is made difficult by the individualization and atomization resulting from the discourse of liberalism which suppresses collective action.

A number of contradictions have been revealed in my study of UCT as an organization, some of which will certainly have resonance with other higher education institutions experiencing similar pressures. As mentioned above, by integrating personal experiences and perceptions with the leadership discourse, I have been able to expose the gap between the emotional (what is experienced) and the rhetoric, between the intention and the action. Individuals experience the University differently from its representation for public consumption. There is widespread awareness of institutional discourses of equity and excellence, but individual lived realities contradict these. The University is a knowledge generator and sharer, yet its people demonstrate little knowledge of or engagement with the complexities of diversity. As an organization, a university is tolerant of different reasons for its existence but my research also shows a strong ability to self-regulate. It is a seductive environment to work in, yet many individuals are repelled by the experience of its culture. All of these speak to the University being a confusing and mystifying organizational environment.

It is worth noting that in the broader environmental context my case University, like other universities, is both powerful and powerless. Power comes from the concept of a 'university' and all that this implies around the control of knowledge. Over the last ten years, globalization has resulted in a conflict between the academic hegemony and the power that comes with control of resources. This has impacted all levels of the institution and currently it would seem that external control of resources (by government or donor agencies) exerts significant power on institutions. This disempowerment is a feature of many universities, particularly in Africa, and suggests that, despite Maassen and Cloete's statement (2002, p. 15): "*All in all it can be argued that the traditional characteristics of universities and colleges make it difficult to initiate and steer organizational changes in them from the outside*", the impetus and power for change in the conservative higher education environment in Africa will come from external agencies that control resource allocation.

10.4 The Gendered Institutional Culture

Gherardi (1995, p. 17) described gender as "*a pervasive symbol of the power relationship*" and, as such, engagement with the gender culture of the University is critical to understanding gender-based change dynamics. In the previous section I contextualized the University as a large bureaucratic organization with a distinctive culture and power dynamic. I now focus in on my first Research Objective and examine the gendered outworkings and expressions of that culture. In Chapter 4 I described the culture of an institution as the norm of experience lived by people in and working with the organization, and suggested that while individual experiences differ there are common threads and themes that run through these experiences enabling a broad description of the organization's culture.

Gherardi (1995, p. 185) has emphasized the importance of gender as "*an organizing principle and an organizing outcome*" that governs asymmetric power relationships in organizations. I start this discussion tracing some of the popular knowledges and assumptions about gender within UCT. Gender as a word is featured in the University's equity rhetoric but there is little evidence of any deep understanding or theorization of gender. The disempowering effects of this are compounded by the

more recent practice of conflating gender into diversity. I then look at gender as 'woman' and how this is dealt with within the institutional culture. These understandings and assumptions about gender are an outcome of the male hegemony that characterizes the gendered culture of the University. I discuss how this male hegemony is strengthened by the institution's ability to vanish gender resulting in a complacency around gender issues that leads me to question whether the gendered culture is as satisfactory as perceived. I do this by theorizing what a truly gender-aware campus would look like.

Gender as rhetoric

Gender is named as a component of the University's equity rhetoric where it forms part of equity policies and counts of demographics. The Mission Statement and equity policies include gender with race, religion, and disability but my data leaves little doubt that the first and most important amongst these is race. The University repeatedly celebrates programmes and resources put towards achieving racial equity (particularly of students) but there is no indication of specific programmes to achieve gender equity (Shackleton, Riordan and Simonis, 2006). The University makes public statements against racial discrimination and has held University Assemblies on the topic. In a highly publicized ceremony the torch of academic freedom was extinguished for 34 years publicly linking racial justice with academic freedom. The University leadership is clearly proud of its stance against racial discrimination. In contrast it has never made a public declaration showing a deep understanding of the impact of gender-based discrimination. In South Africa where gender has historically received a lower priority than race I suggest that the national context in which gender is conflated into diversity allows institutions to focus on the more politically hegemonic issue of race, and that this has the effect of weakening the institutional imperative for bringing about gender-based change. This is particularly the situation in previously 'white' institutions.

Despite gender being part of the liberal rhetoric and a component of the transformation that the University so desperately seeks (Ndebele, 2003, 2005), my research shows a remarkable ignorance around gender issues, particularly on the part of those with formal responsibility for human relations and transformation.

People speak with confidence about gender but reveal a lack of serious engagement with the realities of gendered power relations or theorization around gender in the workplace. Beneath the rhetoric gender appears to be understood in terms of numbers of men and women and consequently institutional efforts to bring about gender-based change focus on increasing numbers of women. This shallow understanding of gender suggests that as an aspect of human relations in the workplace gender has a low institutional priority. With in-depth knowledge about gender (and racial?) power interactions not being deemed to be a professional competency requirement social transformation becomes the more elusive.

Gender as woman

In the popular institutional knowledge gender is frequently taken to mean 'woman'. This is treated in two ways. The liberal agenda suggests that all people are equal and any show of overt discrimination is distasteful. This results in avoiding the use of the word 'woman'. Gender-neutral terms are used such as 'people', 'parents', 'students', and 'staff'. This is evidence of a culture in which people do not wish to be identified as 'woman people'. This contributes to the disappearing of gender as a factor in the institution.

Another way in which gender taken as 'woman' is treated is as a problematic. Gender is associated with sexual harassment of women, and with women becoming pregnant and having to take time off work to care for families. In discussions around the Educare Centre several of the individuals exhibit a level of embarrassment when they talk about parenthood in their work environments. This gives an impression that they feel that being a parent is something that does not fit in with an image they believe appropriate to members of the University community. This is reinforced by their distancing themselves from the Centre once their children had left. The distancing of parenting from the academic endeavour is also evident in the difficulty the coordinator experiences as she tries to integrate the Educare Centre into the academic activities of the University.

The struggle to establish a crèche reveals how alien the concept of reproductive labour as a valid activity of its employees and students is to the University. Employees and students are all expected to conform to the norm exemplified by the

majority of its senior staff, men with appropriate private support structures allowing them to work overtime to achieve the excellence the institution values.

The hegemony of the male

In common with universities across the world strong male hegemony which dominates power relations characterizes the gendered culture of UCT. In Chapter 3 I noted that historically in the Western world and colonial situations universities have been the preserve of white males and that this is only recently being challenged. UCT is no exception. My view of the gendered climate over the past nearly 30 years has reflected a moderation over time in the overt masculinity of the University. This culminated in the appointment of Dr Ramphela as a Deputy Vice Chancellor and later Vice Chancellor in the 1990s.

Despite this strong symbolic statement, my research suggests that although there have been changes in the demography in leadership circles, the white male hegemony persists. Men hold the majority of the senior (particularly academic) positions, their achievements are celebrated through honorary degrees and awards and the male academic career model is the norm. Over the years women and black people who are deemed to meet the required standards of excellence have been invited to participate in this androcentric environment, but there is little evidence of them being able to change it. Programmes that have been established to assist 'the disadvantaged' to meet the required standards to enter this environment risk the unwelcome side effect of othering them. There is an implication that the lack of equity is a result of some deficiency on their part and thus entrenching the white male hegemony. My data suggests an awareness of the need to be seen to be gender-sensitive, but reveals few concrete examples that counter the dominant male hegemony. Even the appointment of the first woman as Vice Chancellor made minimal long-term difference to the gendered climate of the institution as experienced by individuals, and it is interesting to note that she only remained in office for 4 years, by far the shortest term of office of any of UCT's Vice Chancellors (black and white), possibly also pointing to a less-than-welcoming gendered climate.

The vanishing of gender

An important outworking of the gendered climate is the pervasive vanishing of gender in the institution which is revealed in a number of ways by my data. Both the interviews and Reports portray an institution in which gender relations are not considered to be an issue. There is recognition of some inequity in numbers of women and men particularly in senior academic positions but unlike the gross legalized racial inequities of apartheid, the gender-based inequities in the civilized, liberal University environment are much subtler. The University could protest against apartheid and portray itself as fighting an oppressive system. Even post-apartheid, overcoming racial inequities and ensuring reconciliation are a national priority. Gender is also mentioned, however in reality my findings within UCT have shown little evidence of any institutional attention being focused on gender as an issue, let alone a priority.

In looking at the gender climate it is what the Reports do not say that is as interesting as what they do say. The Reports did not celebrate the fact that, in appointing Dr Ramphela, UCT has its first (black) woman Deputy Vice Chancellor and later the first black woman Vice Chancellor in South Africa. They did not mention that at the professional and senior levels men outnumber women by more than 2 to 1 or that senior women have a more rapid turnover than white men (eg UCT Employment Equity Report, October 2002). They did not talk about addressing the factors that continue to limit the number of women moving into more demanding positions. The reader is left to assume that if the opportunity to access the position is equalized, equity will inevitably result. There was no discussion of mainstreaming gender into the curricula or celebration of the activities of the African Gender Institute. There was no overt recognition that gender (and disability) are specific issues, very different from race, and that focused attention needs to be paid to addressing the power inequalities inherent in each of them. From the Reports it seemed that the University leadership was unaware that there might be institutional discrimination resulting from un-thought-through gendered ways of working and interacting.

The interviews also reveal the very low profile of gender issues. There is remarkably little awareness of the influence of gendered power relations in the work place and individuals show very little commitment to doing anything about it. The presence of the African Gender Institute on campus does not seem to have registered as a

resource. There seems to be a latent satisfaction with the way that things are, and people are too busy keeping up with the masculine, aggressive demands of the institution or wary of being seen to be associated with women's issues, to challenge the system or to attempt to bring about any changes.

When specific gender challenges are made there is an institutional reaction to neutralize them. The discussion around the Educare Centre shows how the debate around reproductive labour was shifted from being one of gender politics to being one of resources, and how, when finally and successfully established, the Centre is not celebrated as a feature of the University's gender awareness but is seen as being a cost-effective service. Just as the Centre is contained by its outsider positioning in Properties and Services, so the data revealed the micropolitical processes that attempted to contain and diminish HERS-SA as an overtly feminist activity. These processes of neutralization are discussed in the section below on the dynamics of change.

A gender-sensitive campus

The discussion above has shown how, in the strongly male institutional culture, the significance of gender as a factor influencing the working environment is reduced. This is achieved by the hegemony of the masculine norm, the lack of any real engagement with gender, the low priority assigned it as a transformation issue, and by a pervasive vanishing. At one level interaction with my participants suggests that in the liberal tolerant UCT environment, gender issues are not significant, yet both I and my women participants clearly experience the gendered culture as confusing and disempowering. I found this acceptance of the *status quo* and apathy around improving the gendered culture mystifying and disturbing. Did it mean that the gendered culture of the institution was not as hostile as personal experience suggested? In an attempt to benchmark the gender sensitivity of the University I decided to explore what the campus might look and feel like if gendered power relations were evened out, and I undertook a visioning process to ascertain what a gender-sensitive campus might look like. I identified a number of changes that could eliminate gender-based power inequities and result in an environment where gender would not function as a determinant of allocating power and resources and would not define identities or trajectories. By comparing this ideal with my lived reality I was

able to see clearly the gap between what was possible and the current situation and thus validate my experiences.

I report on this visioning exercise because I found it to be particularly valuable in revealing how I was seduced by the power of the University's liberal rhetoric and ability to vanish the gender agenda. Despite my years of experiencing the gendered climate of the institution, like my participants, I was confused about my perceptions and had a compulsion to 'verify' my experiences. This uncertainty speaks strongly to difficulty in attempting to bring about gender-based change.

The gendered culture in context

My results reveal a gendered culture that, in common with many other international studies of gender in organizations, and in universities in particular, is strongly dominated by the male norm (see Chapters 2 and 3). This is despite the strong equity legislation in South Africa and the pressure being exerted on higher education for transformation. It is however interesting to note that UCT's gendered climate is perceived by some of the participants to compare less favourably to that of other South African universities. Again one can speculate on the influence of the liberal, individualistic discourse that results in a culture that isolates individuals and assigns them full responsibility for their situation. The atomization of people in the institution and their reluctance to be identified as part of a 'group' precludes collective action around gender, and thus, although the gendered climate is experienced as uncomfortable by women, the institutional culture assists in helping them to disappear the underlying causes of their discomfort. A tolerant, paternal attitude makes activism seem ludicrous and pushing for change seem churlish. Consequently addressing transformation in the gendered culture of the University becomes extremely difficult.

My research shows how the gendered culture of UCT reflects that of other institutions described in the literature. Thus I believe that my insights around factors contributing to the conservative patriarchal environment have a wider relevance. I suggest that my theorizations around fragmentation and othering that were evident in the academic environment and the paralysing of collective action within a culture

espousing liberal ideals provide new insights into forces maintaining the androcentric hegemony.

In the next section I discuss how the gendered institutional culture translated into the disempowering dynamics that my embedded studies revealed around gender-based change.

10.5 The dynamics of change

As outlined above my data has shown UCT to be androcentric with strong masculine power structures, and, although there is a discourse of liberalism, this appears to contribute towards a culture of conservatism. In addition, somewhat surprisingly in the positive equity policy environment in South Africa, the University displays a remarkable lack of engagement with gender issues. I now focus on my second Research Objective and explore the dynamics of gender-based change within this institutional context.

From the discussion around the gendered institutional culture it is clear that there is little evidence of any serious commitment to address gender issues within the University and that bringing about gender-based change is not seen as a priority by either men or women. Despite this the Vice Chancellor's Reports show that there have been a number of initiatives with a gendered impact on the campus over the years⁴¹, including the two change initiatives I selected to study. These were chosen because, beyond assisting individual women in the institution, they have the potential to bring about gender-based change. Both also contribute towards addressing institutional and legislated requirements for gender equity. I now discuss the change dynamics around these initiatives, looking at their different contexts and theorizations, the leadership of change, the different approaches to effecting change, the factors that facilitate or inhibit change, and the consequent reactions from the institution.

⁴¹ eg making the housing subsidy available to married women, setting up the Equal Opportunities Research Project, the establishment of the African Gender Institute and the Discrimination and Harassment Office

The context of change

The issue of a crèche for the children of students and staff arose in the 1970s during a time of social activism when women were becoming increasingly aware of the inequities resulting from society's lack of recognition of their reproductive labour. Women spontaneously grouped together inspired by a liberal feminist perspective. de la Rey (1999, p. 56) suggests that the liberal feminist approach "*attempts to achieve change by extending and reforming the existing policies and structures to accommodate women, rather than changing the fundamental components of economic, political and cultural life.*" This finds resonance with the Educare Centre's lack of impact on the gendered institutional climate. In contrast, HERS-SA overtly attempts to impact the gendered climate of higher education. The theorization around HERS-SA builds on the research of Morley, Singh, Acker, Blackmore, Sachs and others and is supported by a national context which specifically highlights as a priority the need "*To increase the representation of blacks and women in academic and administrative positions, especially at senior levels*" (Department of Education, 2001, p. 35).

In some senses HERS-SA is grounded in a socialist feminist theory as it looks at the intersection of class (as defined by hierarchical level) with gender within the institution. Socialist feminism recognizes role stereotyping both in the division of paid and unpaid labour and in the workplace, with women being assigned to positions the dominant patriarchy deems suited to their innate abilities. Socialist feminism uses consciousness raising and practical action to combat this, including the "*development of alternative arrangements that provide models for change, and in the process, alter women's consciousness.*" (Elliot and Mandell, 1995, p. 12). In many ways HERS-SA is congruent with the liberal discourse within UCT as it believes in the empowerment of individual women and the importance of role models. The HERS-SA expectation is that as individual women are made aware of the dominance of the masculine nature of the institution, they will become a force for change.

Change leadership

Despite the conducive external climate, HERS-SA was not an institutional initiative but that of a woman member of the University staff with no direct responsibility for gender transformation. Similarly, the initiative for the crèche arose among affected individuals, who tried unsuccessfully to get the institution to take the initiative. Meyerson and Scully (1995, p. 594) describe this as “*local, spontaneous authentic action*”. Thus in both cases leadership for change came not from those with formal leadership responsibilities but from individuals described by Meyerson and Scully (1995) as tempered radicals, people on the margins of organization who are committed both to their organizations, and to a cause, such as feminism which is often at odds with the dominant culture of the organization.

Both initiatives originated with women who had experienced the normative working environment in the institution as being gender discriminatory. The Educare initiators exerted pressure on the University to recognize that its liberal stance required accepting a responsibility to provide resources to assist women with children better assimilate into the University working environment. The HERS-SA initiative did not directly challenge institutional practices, but offered opportunities to women staff members which it would have been churlish for the institution to refuse.

Following the pattern outlined by McLagan (2003) the women mavericks motivating for childcare in the 1970s and 1980s encountered a lot of resistance and reaction before their ideas were formally accepted by the institution. They were prepared to take the risk to set up the crèche before formally getting funding or support from the institution. My role in establishing the HERS-SA initiative was that of a tempered radical. I was committed to the institution, but also saw how its male hegemony was counter to my liberal feminist ideals. As Meyerson and Scully (1995) write, the small wins approach of the tempered radical is often driven by unexpected opportunities and this was the case when I seized the opportunity offered by the Mellon Foundation. They further say (p. 595): “*To be poised to take advantage of opportunities, the tempered radical’s vision of the specific course of change must be somewhat blurry*”, an excellent description of my experiences in initiating what became HERS-SA.

The absence of institutional leadership initiative (even after repeated appeals in the case of the Educare Centre) is no doubt a reflection of the low priority assigned to gender issues. However it is important to recognize the role of both active champions in the university leadership and the tacit support of the leadership to those involved in establishing both HERS-SA and the Educare Centre. The Registrar played a key role in institutionalizing the Educare Centre and in bringing it to the attention of the Vice Chancellor who then in turn became a powerful champion. With HERS-SA the initial official response to the Mellon Foundation came from Dr Ramphele who was Vice Chancellor at the time. I also received tacit support from my line manager who allowed me to spend time developing HERS-SA. However it should be noted that these champions can also act as gate keepers only letting change happen as far as they want it to and that the involvement of a champion can also be a way of taking control.

Approaches to change

Those motivating for a crèche engaged directly with the University both as activists and by negotiating through formal institutional structures. These engagements were protracted, often heated and often very frustrating. In the language of Martin (2000) the women were attempting to influence the 'choice cascade' within the organization, informing leadership about issues of which they were unaware with the intention of influencing their choices. This clearly was not an easy task and success was only obtained after co-opting powerful champions.

In working to establish HERS-SA my years of experience in the University led me to avoid this type of direct engagement with institutional structures. With the external support of donors and other feminists and the co-opted support of my line-manager who occupied a position of significant personal and hierarchical power I utilized a 'small wins' approach, not attempting to change institutional structures but to provide opportunities which the institution could seize. In doing this I also employed another change technique that has been described by Kolb and Merrill-Sands (1999), Rao and Stuart (1997) and others working in the area of gender-based change. They suggest that gendered change be linked to work practices and outcomes to provide an opportunity to challenge the way work is done. I presented HERS-SA not as a gender awareness programme, but one which focuses on professionalism in higher

education and provides the opportunity to improve organizational practices. The focus on professional development also serves to reduce the institution's anticipated resistance to a gender-focused initiative and thus facilitate institutional support for women to participate in HERS-SA programmes.

Factors facilitating/inhibiting change

Against the background of literature on organizational change, analysis of the two initiatives within the context of the leadership discourse of the Vice Chancellor's Reports enables me to identify factors that facilitate or inhibit change. These are summarized in the table below. Literature suggests the importance for change of having a learning institution and a common vision across the organization of where change is to lead. Both of these are missing in the initiatives I studied. UCT has a conservative culture and there is little awareness of the need for a change in the gendered climate. The literature also emphasizes the importance of an iterative process of feedback, questioning and experimentation. My research suggests that the pressurized work environment within UCT precludes this.

Factors that emerge as inhibiting gender-based change concentrate around the dominant, conservative, male hegemony and structural issues such as control of resources and work pressure. In this environment, the 'small wins', non-confrontational approach of HERS-SA appears to be effective. Access to institutional knowledge and networks through the co-option of champions was critical in both cases. In the HERS-SA study, I believe that my positionality in the institution facilitated this access at a senior level relatively easily. Interacting with student networks initially, the Educare Centre took much longer to obtain support from those in power.

As Parker (2000, p. 226) noted: "*Patriarchy and capitalism are unlikely to be challenged within a single organization*", and the role of external factors was also pivotal in facilitating both initiatives. In the case of HERS-SA this was represented by the moral and financial support from organizations in the United States (Shackleton, submitted 2006), and enforcement of local government legislation provided the final push for the dedicated Educare Centre building. In moving out of the UCT institutional environment HERS-SA avoided interaction with the male

dominated power structures and is purposively tapping into external power bases. This is a considered strategy to access the power in external resource-controlling bodies and is a response to the perceived constraints within the institutional climate.

	HERS-SA	Educare
Change enablers		
Learning organization	no	no
Climate of activism and change	no	yes
General awareness of the need for gendered change	no	no
A common vision across the institution	no	no
Leadership support	tolerance	eventually
Access to powerful networks	Yes	No
Champions with influence/power*	yes	yes
Access to resources	yes, external	eventually
Outside pressure (government, donors, society)	yes	eventually
Time to invest in feedback, questioning	no	no
Support for mavericks, tempered radicals	yes	yes
* In the HERS-SA situation my years of experience and access to networks provided authority		
Change inhibitors		
A feeling of threat to those in power	No, but starting	no
People are too busy, no time	yes	yes
Limited resources	no	yes
Bureaucracy and structural impediments	avoided	yes
Patriarchal culture	yes	yes
Concentration of power in homogenous leadership	Yes, but less homogenous	Yes
Liberal atomization	Yes	Yes
Conservative climate	yes	yes
Culture of consensus and peer-review	avoided	yes
Not perceived to be related to core business	avoided?	yes

(Green indicates a positive environment/factor, red one which inhibits change)

Table 7. Summary of environmental factors influencing gendered change initiatives

University responses

It is interesting to compare the institutional responses to the two initiatives. When the institution found it could not ignore the demand for child care, it set about a process of assimilation into institutional structures which shifted the debate from one of feminist concerns to one of resources. Structures were used to legitimately contain, control and vanish the Centre. It now occupies a peripheral position within and on the campus and the gendered debate has been silenced. By never seeking institutionalization, HERS-SA is not controlled by institutional structures or the power associated with resource allocation, and it has not stimulated the overt strong responses typical of the Educare Centre. Rather the institution reacted with an overt benign tolerance which included support for bringing international funding into the University. However, beyond this my research reveals a strong micropolitical response whereby language and attitudes serve to contain and diminish HERS-SA as a gendered initiative. These are summed up in the table below. It can be seen that although it is possible to avoid overt containment (eg assimilation, direct blocking, limiting resources) as HERS-SA did, it appeared to be more difficult for either change initiative to avoid the more subtle, micropolitical efforts to vanish change.

	HERS-SA	Educare
Techniques used to 'vanish' change		
Assimilation	no	yes
Sidelining, downplaying	yes	yes
Minimizing, trivializing	Yes	Yes
Depoliticizing by shifting focus to structural, financial issues	no	yes
Setting up bureaucratic procedures	avoided	yes
Labeling and othering of change agents	yes	yes
Directly blocking	no	no
Limiting resources (finances, space, time)	no	yes

(Green indicates a positive effect, red a negative effect)

Table 8. Summary of techniques used to contain gender-based change

Currently both initiatives are essentially ignored by the institution. The Educare Centre is lost somewhere in Properties and Services, everyone who knows about it thinks it is marvelous, but no effort is made to capitalize on it as a resource or an example of the University's liberal credentials. HERS-SA has moved off the campus. I suggest that the HERS-SA initiative is tolerated and receives leadership support because it is seen as targeting individual women. It does not threaten the male hegemony as it is not perceived to be attempting to change institutional culture or to require any significant resources. However, it is worth noting that the interviews with participants who have a responsibility for equity in the institution did appear threatened by HERS-SA which might be seen as showing up their lack of action with respect to gender. No attempt is made by the University to utilize HERS-SA as a resource to contribute towards its elusive equity and transformation goals. Neither initiative appears to have made an impact on the dominant masculine culture of the institution. In different ways both initiatives occupy insider/outsider positions within the University. HERS-SA is outside the structure, but in addressing professional development of women is attempting to find congruence with the institutional rhetoric of equity and excellence. The Educare Centre is structurally positioned within the University, but being focused on reproductive labour is culturally alien to the core business of the institution.

10.6 Summary

In this Chapter I have discussed the findings related to my first and second Research Objectives focusing on the gendered institutional culture and the dynamics of change. I highlighted features of my methodology which combined to provide a powerful approach to exposing the complexities of institutional culture and change dynamics: the innovative use of the case study method, triangulation of data sources, the integration of many different types of data, and my positionality. My analysis reveals a number of characteristics within UCT that contribute towards its marked conservatism. In addition to the formal hierarchical and collegial structures

typical of many universities, my data reveals a culture which 'others' people into differently empowered groups at the same time as espousing liberal values and privileging individualism. The resultant mystification is exhausting and confusing to those who are not part of the dominant group, and combines with fragmented understandings of purpose and vision to stifle institutional change and thus strengthen conservatism. I theorize that these features of the institutional culture revealed at UCT could also be present in other similar higher education institutions contributing to their conservatism. My research identifies the dominant power group within the institution to be white males with academic reputations, in leadership positions. This defines the gendered climate, and as Lawler (1999) and Hearn (2001) have pointed out this tends to be a feature particularly of institutions that see themselves as prestigious research universities.

Beyond the male hegemony, the most significant aspect of the gendered institutional climate is the pervasive vanishing of gender on the campus. Gender is perceived as woman or numbers of women and is not seen to be related to power or the dynamics of work environment. There is very little evidence of any ability to seriously engage with gender or any recognition that this might be a priority. The power of the culture to vanish gender as an issue is disturbing and mystifying to the women in the organization, but the dominant culture discourages any gendered action on their part.

Gender-based change initiatives struggle for acceptance in this environment. The two that were studied were the result of spontaneous action of tempered radicals, insiders within the institution who felt alienated by aspects of its culture and thus were also positioned as outsiders. Through activism and negotiation over many years the Educare Centre attempted to integrate into the formal institutional structures. Whilst institutionalization would seem to be a positive outcome, my research has shown the power of institutional structures to de-politicize and neutralize feminist activism. Assimilation results in disempowerment of the gender-based imperative. In avoiding institutionalization, the HERS-SA initiative showed a different approach which reduced the power of institutional structures over it. Whilst this was successful in allowing HERS-SA to develop as it wished and retain its feminist impact, it carried a cost related to visibility within the institution.

Most noticeable is that neither approach to change was able to avoid stimulating widespread, micropolitical reactions to contain and diminish them. In the case of HERS-SA these reactions suggest that HERS-SA might also be challenging this male hegemony in another way. The pervasive efforts to minimize the impact of HERS-SA encountered during my research provide some evidence that HERS-SA's independent, externally-validated feminist presence on campus is starting to cause a level of discomfort which has the potential to lead to a questioning of values and norms. At present it is too soon to judge the success or otherwise of HERS-SA in impacting the gendered culture of the institution.

Currently the institution displays an attitude of benign tolerance towards both initiatives, and there is little evidence of either change initiative resulting in broader gender-based change in the institutional culture. My research shows that the power inherent in conservative patriarchal culture of universities makes effecting gender-based change extremely difficult and contributes to understanding some of the dynamics around this. Different approaches to change whether activism, negotiation, or the 'small wins' approach of the tempered radical all stimulate deep-seated patriarchal conservatism and political and micropolitical forces are brought to bear. I therefore suggest that for change to succeed it is necessary to reduce the power of the conservative institution over the initiative. HERS-SA has suggested one way that this can be done, by distancing itself from institutional structures and drawing on external sources of power that are sympathetic to the feminist cause. I suggest that this alliance with sympathetic organizations and structures outside the conservative university is the key to bringing about change that challenges the university's gendered culture. I discuss this further in the next and final Chapter where I discuss the implications of my findings for effecting broader based transformation.

CHAPTER 11

11. CONCLUSIONS

[I]t is important to bring silent voices to the 'surface', or conscious level, of the organisation, and recognize that in every organisation there are contested meanings. Listening to one group of voices within or outside the organisation reveals only one part of the story. ...It is a little like a kaleidoscope – every time you shake it or change the lens, you see a slightly different configuration of the same elements". (Rao and Stuart, 1997, p. 15)

The aim of my research has been to investigate how gender-based transformations are effected in the higher education environment and explore what this might reveal about transforming higher education institutions. In doing this I have tried to surface “*silent voices*” and shake the kaleidoscope to expose “*contested meanings*” of complex concepts around transformation, the university, institutional culture and gender. Whilst I recognize that my insights provide but “*one part of the story*”, I believe they can contribute towards greater understanding. In this final Chapter I discuss the relationship between change and transformation, and look at what my research suggests about transforming the gendered culture in the University. Before concluding I theorize around the implications for negotiating broader based transformation in South African higher education, thus addressing my third Research Objective.

11.1 From change to transformation

The analysis of the leadership discourse has shown the evolution of the understanding of the concept of transformation to the University leadership. From something that society ‘out there’ had to do, transformation moved ever closer into the University, first being seen to apply to the demography of the student body, then to that of the staff, and most recently to the institutional culture and the manner in which individuals relate to each other. This increasingly complex interpretation of transformation mirrors the environment to which the University is responding. The apartheid legislation provided an obvious focus for the early transformatory action.

Post-1994, this external focus evaporated and transformation focused inward on the institutional structure, broadening to include aspects of globalization, efficiency and accountability. Social transformation focused on ensuring equality of opportunity to all. Provided you were good enough (excellence) you could become part of the organization, and if you were not good enough, the liberal organization would provide programmes to equip you to fit in (assimilate).

Over the past 30 years there have been many changes in the University and many facets of its activity have been 'transformed'. A number of these are integral to global technological development and have been adopted with alacrity, changing the ways things are done, and opening up opportunities. For example, efficient and effective Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is now essential to the University. The Reports show how the University has embraced global trends to increasingly corporatize higher education. There has been increased acceptance of the need to demonstrate both social and economic accountability. Another 'transformation' is evident in the demographics of the student body now 50% black and 50% female and, at the opposite end of the hierarchy, the demographics of the Executive. In 1987 it was comprised entirely of white men, in 2005 it had almost doubled in size and included eight women, five black people, and ten white men.

Despite these 'transformations' the Vice Chancellor lists as his top priority for his remaining term in office the "*deepening of transformation at UCT*" (Ndebele, 2005, p. 3). He makes it clear that he believes that all aspects of the University still need to transform.

I have attempted to frame transformation at UCT as an integrated and multi-faceted endeavour that must necessarily permeate the university, involving all members of our community and underpinning all activities. (Ndebele, 2005, p. 8)

And he talks about:

refining the model of transformation to take cognizance of the need to adapt the approach to one that more appropriately responds to differentiated experiences of race, gender and disability. (Ibid, p. 9)

Why after so many years does the Vice Chancellor believe there is so much remaining to be done? The University has talked about transformation since the

early 1990s. It has had workshops on transformation, it has appointed committees, facilitated fora, and charged Directors and Executive Officers with the responsibility for effecting transformation. What is so elusive about transformation?

During my research I have used both the words 'change' and 'transformation', but it is now useful to explore the distinction between them, particularly as I have applied them to the South African higher education environment. To change something, means to make it different in some way. A change can be small or large, but the essence of what is changed remains the same. To transform something is to turn it into something completely different. Change is necessary for transformation, but not all change leads to transformation. In South Africa the word 'transformation' is used very specifically to refer to the post-apartheid process of political and social change to establish social equality and democracy (South African Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2006, p. 1247). The intention expressed is that transformation in South Africa will lead to a completely different social and political environment, not one that has merely been changed here and there. The use of the word 'transformation' as applied to South African higher education expresses a similar desire. There is an emphasis on equality and social justice within the institution but the leaders of some institutions such as UCT have applied these principles more widely to encompass the purpose, ideology and functioning of the university itself as a component of a democratic society. A transformed university would be a completely different kind of institution of higher learning, one based on principles of equality and social justice which would permeate every aspect of its operation.

Changes are required around practices and attitudes based on race, gender and class for an eventual transformation of the institution's social climate. The changes in themselves are not sufficient. More is needed to achieve transformation to a diverse, multicultural organization. My research has studied two gender-based change initiatives which are acknowledged to be successes, but which do not seem to have resulted in any significant change, let alone transformation, of the gendered climate. Individuals have benefited from both HERS-SA and the Educare Centre, but the analysis of the gendered climate of the institution shows the continuing strength of the male hegemony. It is now valuable to return to the literature on organizational change outlined in Chapter 2 to provide insight on my data with a view

to exploring how gendered transformation might take place in universities such as UCT.

The environment of redress and social equity in South Africa exerts a strong pressure on universities to become more diverse. Over recent years the UCT leadership discourse shows how this has been interpreted to mean an all-encompassing transformation of every aspect of the institution. Beer and Nohria (2000) identified dual motivators for change, those that focus on systems and structures and those that are motivated by the need to develop human capacity. Analysis of the Vice Chancellor's Reports has shown how UCT in common with other universities (Singh, 2001; Badat, 2001) has found the former, more masculine, top-driven changes to be much easier to achieve than the more feminine, human-centred changes. This difficulty in addressing change related to cultural diversity is compounded by the perceived hierarchy of disadvantage. In particular, in post-apartheid South Africa this can result in a vanishing of gender issues in the discourse of diversity and a perceived priority of racial injustice. My research has shown that within UCT currently there is little appreciation of any imperative for gendered change.

From which quarter then could the initiative for gendered change come? Bennis (2000) has spoken of the myth of the hero leader and emphasized the impossibility of one person bringing about change without the support of others. He points out the importance of support for leaders of change, irrespective of their positional power. (This is illustrated in my analysis that shows how little change to the gender climate persisted after having a woman in a senior executive position.⁴²) In their writings Drucker and Senge both raised the significance of the knowledge existent in people at all levels of the organization as a motivator of change. Martin (2000) also points to the role that a range of individuals across the organization play as they use their particular knowledge to make choices which influence its functioning. Other researchers suggest that certain groups of individuals within the organization might be more likely to act as change agents. McLagan (2003) talks about nurturing

⁴² Particularly during her Deputy Vice Chancellorship Dr Ramphela raised the profile of gender-related issues such as equal opportunities, sexual harassment and the AGI, but thereafter these disappear from the rhetoric.

mavericks, people who are not part of the mainstream, but have the energy and commitment to go beyond their job descriptions to question how things are done and challenge the system. Meyerson and Scully (1995) explore the role of tempered radicals, people on the margins of organization, as internal change agents. A number of authors (eg Cox, 1993; Blackmore and Sachs, 2001; Hearn, 2001; de la Rey, 2005; Subotzky, 2001) suggest that women, particularly in higher education, may be better positioned to act as change agents than men because of their more relational, transformative style of leadership.

My research suggests that in the patriarchal university culture gendered change is unlikely to be led by those who have attained hierarchical leadership positions and are thus most threatened by change. The initiative for gender-based change in both my studies came from individuals in non-hierarchical leadership positions who were driven by feminist values. In a somewhat “*blurry way*” (Meyerson and Scully, 1995, p. 595) they seized opportunities, and neither initiative was guided by a carefully structured plan. In the UCT situation, where the (hero) leadership is dominated by white male norms, the role of mavericks, tempered radicals and individuals at all levels within the institution becomes especially significant in bringing about change. Fortunately, despite universities being highly conservative organizations with a bureaucracy that discourages risk and initiative-taking, my data has shown that universities which espouse liberal values exhibit a level of benign tolerance towards tempered radicals and mavericks. Herein lies the opportunity for gendered change.

I now ask whether this ‘grass-roots’ approach to change, which has resulted in successful programmes and is clearly assisting individual women but has not had an obvious impact on the gendered institutional culture, can contribute towards institutional transformation.

11.2 Transforming gendered institutional culture

Peter Senge sees the ability to respond, adapt and change as a key element of a successful organization. He talks of the learning organization, one which is adaptable, flexible and encourages the growth of its staff. He suggests it is the creativity of individuals in the complex system that is the organization that is able to shape it in response to its environment through a process of experimentation and feedback. Ideally a university as a centre of learning should be the epitome of such a learning organization. However my examination of the culture of UCT suggests that despite their rhetoric, universities are not necessarily learning organizations in this sense. The interviews show that the staff, particularly the administrative staff, experience UCT as very conservative with many formal and informal procedures that maintain a rigid structure. McLagan (2003) talks about the need for a change-friendly organization to nurture mavericks. Again, the traditional concept of a university is one in which the students and academic staff are individualists who are encouraged to think innovatively. This almost certainly helped during the early days of the establishment of the crèche when it belonged to the maverick sector of the University. Its subsequent incorporation into the administration resulted in quashing any maverick behaviour.

Essential to the learning culture required for bringing about institutional transformation is the encouragement of questioning and experimentation followed up by critical review of what is being achieved and how this might impact existing ways of doing things (the feedback Senge spoke about, also emphasized by Ely and Meyerson, 2000). This requires the time and the will to participate in an iterative, questioning process. I believe that this is one of the reasons why the establishment of a successful Educare Centre has made so little impact on the UCT. Its establishment has been seen as an end in itself, rather than one of a suite of initiatives that continually question the gendered culture of the institution. The work norm of the University is one which results in participants describing themselves as being under pressure, and having limited resources and time, particularly for 'peripheral' issues, such as childcare. This is not conducive to encouraging reflection and feedback. The reviews of the Educare Centre have all focused on its financial viability and congruence with the core business of the University. My data gives no

evidence that there has ever been any questioning as to whether the Educare facilities are actually meeting the originally identified need, or whether there are other ways in which practices in the institution might change to take cognizance of the gendered division of labour. Taking this further, there has been no questioning of how normative assumptions about work and productivity might disadvantage different groups of people.

In avoiding institutionalization with the HERS-SA initiative I took a very different approach. While several of the participants accuse HERS-SA of a low profile, I see this low profile as serving to quietly inoculate the University against a developing powerful negative reaction to gendered transformation. In addition, small wins can snowball creating additional opportunities for change. This is evidenced by the growth of HERS-SA and its movement out of UCT, to reach across South Africa and into West and East Africa. HERS-SA's approach creates women-only spaces in which to question assumptions around work practices, structures and norms that have been created by men. This downplays the differences between men and women by focusing on the ways which the organization privileges men's values and ways of working. Through this questioning the HERS-SA initiative is attempting to unearth and inspire a multitude of tempered radicals across higher education in South Africa, each of whom will seize opportunities and make small wins in her institution.

The studies of the two initiatives have shown how gender-based change initiatives can be highly successful, and acknowledged as such by the University, but yet make minimal, if any, impact on the gendered culture of the institution. This finding is not unique. Organization researchers such as Ely and Meyerson (1998, 2000), Kolb and Merrill-Sands (1999) comment on how complex gendered change is and how progress towards gender equity has been partial, slow and superficial, and that organizations themselves have changed very little. My question now is: If bringing about gendered change and transformation is so difficult, how can we conceive of the broader social transformation in higher education?

11.3 Institutional transformation

Despite the conservatism of the sector, many of us who have been working in the higher education environment over the past decades would agree with Blackmore and Sachs (2000) that the university in which we started our careers is now a very different place. These changes have had complex gender consequences. In Chapter 3 I outlined some of the literature on how globalization has impacted on higher education, strengthening the masculine character of universities and stressing the work environment (more work with fewer people and more accountability with fewer resources). At the same time there has been an increasing call for social transformation with gender equity being highlighted as a target for change. I noted how the effects of globalization have often been confused with transformation and how this stimulated thinkers such as Mala Singh to call for a focus on social justice in higher education. It is depressing to note that she suggests that incorporating social justice issues into the increasingly corporatized system of higher education will be *“likely to prove enormously difficult if not impossible”* (Singh 2001, p. 20).

My research has confirmed personal perspectives of the University of Cape Town being a very conservative, androcentric, patriarchal environment and supports numerous previous studies of universities worldwide. However many universities have a self-image which espouses liberal values and social responsiveness and my research at UCT shows how this can contribute to a climate of tolerance towards initiatives of maverick individuals. Although this tolerance can be reasoned away on the basis of cost, core business, or lack of resources such as space or time, or other more pressing priorities, it does allow the surfacing of ideas even though they might not be provided with subsequent support. I believe that despite the conservatism of the sector, a university's desire to be seen as socially responsive represents an opportunity for effecting transformation.

The power of the male hegemony can threaten this opportunity. My research has also demonstrated how even a mildly confrontational approach can stimulate a complex of political and micropolitical actions and reactions which can eventually completely disempower a change initiative whilst the institution still maintains a liberal façade. The HERS-SA study suggests that it is possible to reduce the power that the male hegemony can exert by avoiding direct confrontation with the dominant

patriarchal culture of the University. This power can also be reduced by forging external alliances with those sympathetic to the cause who have the credibility and access to resources to influence the institution.

Just as relational practice is vanished, I anticipate that any eventual transformation of the culture of the institution will be low-profile and not involve hero leadership, but result from multiple small wins, by people at all levels of the organization. I believe that this approach which attempts transformation 'by stealth', with more and more people questioning normative practices, could quietly contribute to social transformation in the conservative, male-dominated higher education environment in South Africa. There must be acceptance that we are not working with learning institutions as defined by Senge and that there is no deep appreciation across the institution of the negative impacts of the white male hegemony. Parker describes organizational culture as "*a continuing process of articulating contested versions of what the organization should be doing, who it should be responsible to and who does what work for what reward*" (Parker, 2000, p. 226). Culture is continuously being negotiated and thus the surfacing of 'silent voices' to bring them into the negotiations is critical.

A number of researchers have suggested that by virtue of the behaviours traditionally associated with them, women will play a significant role in bringing about social transformation. This is something that I too intuitively feel and it formed one of the original foci of my research. Whether they are likely to be more effective change agents than men or not, I cannot tell from my research as my studies have both looked only at women's initiatives. But I suggest that this gender perception could be useful. Being a woman in higher education one is seen as an outsider by the dominant male leadership and this outsider status gives a certain freedom to challenge the structures. However, it is pertinent to recall the warning from a colleague in a sister university in South Africa:

Our struggle is more complicated for we must forge alliances with women and identify male allies across differences of race, ethnicity and gender. We cannot pretend that we constitute homogenous groupings, or some mythical sisterhood. (Walker, 1997, p. 17)

My study of institutional transformation in South Africa has focused on one aspect of transformation in one higher education institution. The complexity of transformation in differing contexts has yet to be explored. Qualitative research is needed focusing on change dynamics around other aspects of transformation, particularly race and class, and their interaction with their specific contexts. I suggest that the in-depth, feminist qualitative approach I used to expose micropolitical power interactions is a powerful way of exposing institutional cultures. By building up a kaleidoscope of these studies, in different institutions, a pattern can emerge which will provide a basis for understanding the dynamics of transformation in the complex higher education environment.

11.4 Conclusion

My Central Research Question asked how gender-based transformations are effected in the higher education environment and what this might be able to tell us about transforming higher education institutions. This question arose from personal experience of a conservative institution and a deep concern about the perceived slow progress of social transformation. In addressing the question, I have used an innovative, feminist, self-reflexive, qualitative methodology which allowed me to access different types of data and integrate them with personal experience.

Analysis of my data from the University of Cape Town has illustrated how resistant the sector can be to gendered change and transformation, but, despite this, my analysis suggests that some of the features of higher education organizations do provide opportunities for those who question, seizing opportunities and focusing on small wins. My analyses indicate that this will not be a rapid process and that the gender component of institutional transformation is unlikely to be led by the male-dominated institutional leadership. The 'heroic leader' that we must look to for gendered transformation is the feminist who repeatedly "*bring[s] silent voices to the surface*" (Rao and Stuart, 1997, p. 15), building up a broad network of allies within and beyond her institution as she seizes opportunities and chalks up small win after small win.

This self-reflexive research process has been a difficult one, stretching my insider / outsider relationship to an institution with which I have been associated for 40 years. But despite the pain and questioning I conclude that I could do no other. If we truly want social transformation, each of us must question, must experiment, and must feedback to contribute to the iterative process that becomes transformation.

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APPENDIX 1: ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT

ACE	American Council on Education
AGI	African Gender Institute
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AIMS	Audit and Integration of Management Systems
ANC	African National Congress
ASP	Academic Support Programme
ATN	Australian Technology Network
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHEC	Cape Higher Education Consortium
DISCHO	Discrimination and Harassment Office
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HERS	Higher Education Resources Services (in the USA)
HERS-SA	Not an acronym
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NPO	Non Profit Organization
OWHE	Office of Women in Higher Education
P&S	Properties and Services
PASS	Professional and Support Staff
SA WISE	South African Women in Science and Engineering
SHAWCO	Students Health and Welfare Centres Organization
SRC	Students' Representative Council
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
UCT	University of Cape Town
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
VC	Vice Chancellor
WEXDEV	Women's Executive Development Programme

APPENDIX 2: UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS CITED

Documents housed in University Archives

- 1974a. "Proposals by the S.R.C. to Establish a Crèche", L Read, Deputy Registrar, Finance
- 1974b. "Nursery School / Crèche", unsigned.
1977. Letter dated 1 February 1977 to the Principal, signed L Read
1978. Letter dated 20 January 1978 to Sir Richard Luyt, Vice Chancellor, signed Mona Bracher and Louise Le Roux Oberholzer
1979. A letter dated 11 May 1979 to the Registrar signed Prof D Matravers, Acting Head of the Department of Applied Mathematics
1980. "Minutes of the Eleventh General Meeting of the 1979/80 Students' Representative Council", 28 February 1980
1982. Council Minutes, December 1982
1985. "Memorandum" dated 29 November 1985 to Mr D B Edwards, Deputy Registrar – Personnel from K J McKenzie, Training and Industrial Relations Officer
- 1986a. "Memorandum" dated 11 March 1986 to Chair Educare Advisory Committee signed Deputy Registrar
- 1986b. Letter dated 9 May 1986 to the Registrar from Senior Industrial Relations and Training Officer, K J McKenzie
- 1986c. Confidential note: "Educare Centre: parents meeting of 2nd October 1986", dated 3 October 1986 to the Vice Chancellor from the Senior Industrial Relations Officer
- 1988a. "A Review of UCT's Educare Facility", H T Amore, Registrar, Document prepared for Council meeting May 1988
- 1988b. "Memorandum, Minutes of the Staff/Parents Meeting held on Wednesday 1 June 1988", no author
1992. Letter dated 22 April 1992 to Mr H Amore from S L Bailey on behalf of the Educare Management Committee
1995. Email "Subject: Educare Advisory Committee Chair" to Malcolm (unknown last name) from Frank Molteno, dated 15 September 1995

1996. "Memorandum to Council", 14 March 1996, Dr S J Saunders, Vice Chancellor, Chair of the Educare Advisory Committee

2002. UCT Employment Equity Report to the Department of Labour, submitted October 2002

No date: Letter addressed to Dr S Saunders signed by S L Bailey, Acting coordinator on behalf of the Management Committee

Documents from Personal HERS-SA Files

1999a. "Notes on Meetings held to discuss possible Mellon involvement in training middle management women in the United States, 27 August, 1999", L Shackleton

1999b. "Report on Visit to the University of Cape Town, August 30 1999", A. F. (Tish) Emerson

2002a. "Proposal seeking support from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation for the establishment of a HERS Leadership Institute in the Western Cape, South Africa", submitted 10 April 2002.

2002b. Letter to Dr J Leatt, Executive Consultant, CHEC, dated 6 May 2002, signed L Shackleton)

2003a. "Proposal to the Andrew W Mellon Foundation for the Further Development of HERS-SA July 2003 – June 2004", submitted 17 January 2003, L Shackleton

2003b. "Constitution of the Voluntary Association known as HERS-SA", drawn up by Richard Rosenthal and Attorneys.

2006. "HERS-SA: Lifting, leading learning". HERS-SA Pamphlet. 6pp.

Other unpublished documents

2005a. Letter from Vice Chancellor Ndebele to the UCT community, email communication dated April 29, 2005

2005b. Press Release, "Carnegie Corporation of New York Announces Strengthening South African University Program". Email dated 31 March 2005 from Carnegie Foundation to L. Shackleton.

2007. Riordan, S. "Women in Senior Positions in South African Universities, 2007". Pers. Comm.

APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDES

Educare Centre Interview Guide

I am going to ask you what you know about the establishment of the Educare Centre at UCT and how it operates.

Context:

1. Could you briefly describe your responsibilities at UCT
2. When did you first become involved with the Educare Centre?
3. Please describe the attitude of UCT towards the Educare Centre at that time?
4. How would you describe your relationship to the Educare Centre?

Story of the initiative

1. Please describe what you know about the history of the Educare Centre?
2. How does the Educare Centre operate now, who runs it, how does it fit into the University structures, how it is financed?
3. How does the Committee structure work? Are minutes kept of meetings?
4. What would you say have been your greatest challenges the Educare Centre has had to face?
5. From whom or what sector have you found the most support for the Educare Centre?
6. Have there been any specific enablers/enabling circumstances that helped you achieve what you wanted to do? Describe? (*personal, positional, environmental, political*)
7. What makes things difficult? Can you identify specific problems and hindrances? Describe how you get around them?
8. Were there people who helped you? In what way? Why do you think they helped you?
9. Were there people who seemed to make things difficult? How? Why do you think they were difficult?
10. How do you feel about your involvement with the Educare Centre?
11. In retrospect, as the Educare Centre developed are there things that you might have done differently or that you feel should have been done differently?

Impact

1. Who are the people who make use of the crèche (*race, class, position*)?
2. Who else do you think has/is benefiting from the Educare Centre?
3. Please describe any unexpected consequences arising from having the Educare Centre on campus?
4. Do you think that there are remaining challenges? What are they? Why do you think that these have not yet been achieved?
5. What do you think the attitude is to the crèche these days? (*individuals, UCT*)
6. Do you sense that this attitude changed over the years? How?
7. Is there anything you would like to add?

Thank you

HERS-SA Interview Guide

I would like to explore what you know about the establishment of HERS-SA and UCT's attitude to it.

Context:

1. Please could you describe what your position was when you first went on / encountered a HERS-SA programme and what your current position is.
2. When and how did you first come across HERS-SA?
3. Did you know of any similar previous initiatives to target professional women in the institution? Please briefly describe them.
4. How would you describe the attitudes within UCT towards the HERS professional development concept for women at the time you encountered HERS-SA?

Story of the initiative

12. Please describe what you know about the history HERS-SA at UCT.
5. What do you think enabled it to get going? (*Activism, political situation, what motivated key initiators?*)
13. How does the University relate to HERS-SA? Who is responsible for working with HERS-SA? How did you get to go on a HERS programme? (*Explore in depth, try to establish whether it is integrated at all into UCT structures.*)

14. From whom or what sector in the University do you think the strongest support for HERS-SA activities has come? What was the form of this support?
15. Were there people who seem to make things difficult? How? Why do you think they were being difficult?
16. Please describe your attitude to HERS-SA and its activities.
17. HERS-SA has moved out of UCT where it started and become an independent non-profit organization. What do you feel about this?
18. In retrospect, as the HERS-SA activities developed on campus, are there things that you feel might have been done differently?

Impact

8. Which constituency do you think gets most benefit from supporting HERS-SA on campus? (*race, class, position*)? Has this changed over the years?
9. Which other people or groups do you think have, or are, benefiting from supporting HERS-SA activities at UCT?
10. How successful do you feel HERS-SA has been? What do you see as some of its main successes or failures (examples)?
11. From a personal perspective can you describe how your involvement with HERS-SA activities has impacted you professionally and personally.
12. Are you aware of any unexpected consequences arising from UCT supporting HERS-SA? Please could you describe these.
13. Do you think that there are remaining challenges? What are they? Why do you think that these have not yet been achieved?
14. What do you think the attitude among the leadership at UCT is to HERS-SA these days?
15. Do you sense that this attitude changed over the years? How? What do you think were the driving factors for this change?
16. Is there anything you would like to add?

Thank you

APPENDIX 4: TRANSFORMATION DISCOURSE ANALYSIS MATRIX

The matrix below was used as a template for mapping the interaction of different themes of transformation (across the top axis) with the areas in which their impact could be detected (vertical axis). This table was completed for each Vice Chancellor's Report.

	Race	Gender	Efficiency /acntabil.	Epistemol.	Social respons.	General
Policies						
Who is in-crowd						
Profile of leadership						
Profile of lower ranks						
Power groupings						
Language						
What is not said						
Dress						
Who gets rewarded						
Behaviour rewarded						
Symbols						
Rituals						
Values						
Org. structure						
Appearance, buildings						
What taken seriously						
What is ignored						
What followed-up						
Institutional memory						
What is celebrated						
Sport extramural act.						

APPENDIX 5: UCT Mission Statement

Our mission is to be an outstanding teaching and research university, educating for life and addressing the challenges facing our society.

Educating for life means that our educational process must provide:

- a foundation of skills, knowledge and versatility that will last a lifetime, despite a changing environment;
- research-based teaching and learning;
- critical enquiry in the form of the search for new knowledge and better understanding; and
- an active developmental role in our cultural, economic, political, scientific and social environment.

Addressing the challenges facing our society means that we must come to terms with our past, be cognizant of the present, and plan for the future. In this, it is central to our mission that we:

- recognize our location in Africa and our historical context;
- claim our place in the international community of scholars;
- strive to transcend the legacy of apartheid in South Africa and to overcome all forms of gender and other oppressive discrimination;
- be flexible on access, active in redress, and rigorous on success;
- promote equal opportunity and the full development of human potential;
- strive for interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration and synergy; and
- value and promote the contribution that all our members make to realizing our mission.

To equip people with lifelong skills we must and will:

- promote the love of learning, the skill of solving problems, and the spirit of critical enquiry and research; and
- take excellence as the benchmark for all we do.

We are committed to academic freedom, critical scholarship, rational and creative thought, and free enquiry. It is part of our mission to ensure that these ideals live; this necessarily requires a dynamic process of finding the balance between freedom and responsibility, rights and obligations, autonomy and accountability, transparency and efficiency, and permanence and transience, and of doing this through consultation and debate.

APPENDIX 6: Social Responsiveness and Epistemology in the Vice Chancellor's Reports

The five main themes of transformation to emerge as significant from the analysis of the discourse in the Vice Chancellor's Reports were: Race, Gender, Efficiency/Accountability, Social Responsiveness, and Epistemology. The latter two emerged as less relevant to my focus on institutional culture and gender dynamics and thus have been excluded from the main body of the thesis. The results relating to these themes are summarized below.

Social Responsiveness

From the first Report it is clear that the University sees itself as having a role to play in the society in which it finds itself and the social responsibility of the University to its environment is an evolving theme of the Reports. In the first two decades, this environment was seen to comprise three areas: those disadvantaged by apartheid including the poor (in townships); outreach to non-traditional learners through adult education and extra mural studies; and involvement in policy change in higher education and the country. UCT's student outreach programme, the SHAWCO (Students Health and Welfare Centres Organization) programme is highlighted in every Report up until 1993, but thereafter is only referred to again in the 2002 Report. Between 1993 and 2002, social responsibility activities receive less attention in the Reports which tend to highlight contributions by academics towards policy development and contributions from applied research.

Whereas the first University Mission Statement states that "*The University wishes to function in an intimate contact with and to contribute to its environment.It encourages direct participation in community work*" (Saunders, 1985, p. 2) the more recent institutional Mission Statement falls short of committing to participation in "community work", calling rather for the "*educational process*" to provide "*an active developmental role in our cultural, economic, political, scientific and social environment.*" (Saunders, 1995, no page number). This view of social responsiveness emphasizing applied research activities is particularly highlighted in the 2003 report which celebrates the launch of an annual "Social Responsiveness Report" to stand alongside the annual "Research Report" and "Teaching and Learning Report". Social Responsiveness is elevated to comprise a whole Section of the 2005 Report. This Section begins:

The way in which UCT directs the creation and dissemination of knowledge towards the identified needs of our communities is at the core of our mission. It is our belief as a tertiary institution that such social responsiveness enhances excellence in both teaching and research. (Ndebele, 2005, p. 38).

This current rhetoric on social responsiveness emphasizes integration, linking "*scholarly based activities*" (p. 38) with society's needs to "*benefit the nation by bridging the academic and community environments*" (p. 39).

In summary, over the 29 year period, the presentation of social responsibility in the Annual Reports indicates a shift in the way it has been conceived by the University. The initial recognition of the hands-on involvement of students in impoverished

communities evolves into a key aspect of the institution's image of itself in society. There has been decreasing emphasis on adult education and extra mural studies, areas of University activity that were reported on in the late 1970s and the early 1980s. From the late 1990s the emphasis was on the value to society of research outputs, the contributions made through contract research, and the increased liaison with industry. Recently social responsiveness is used to recreate the academic endeavour as a public good, emphasizing the integration of the University into society. This more integrated academic approach to social responsibility is most clearly demonstrated in the way in which reference to HIV/AIDS research and activism permeates the 2003 report and is again fore-fronted in the 2005 Report.

Epistemology

Analysis of the Reports also show an evolution in the University's perception of what is considered knowledge worth pursuing. This is reflected in the Reports by references to areas of teaching and research. From the earliest Reports the creative and performing arts were highlighted, often in a dedicated sub-section of the Report. During the 1980s, the sciences and engineering were prominent in comments on research activities, however the 1991 Report broadens the focus and points to the steady growth in research income in the humanities and social sciences.

Two themes are relevant to the discussion of transformation. The first is related to the University's changed understanding of social responsiveness and calls for the knowledge that the University develops and imparts to be relevant to society's needs. The second focuses on the importance of situating the intellectual activity of the institution in Africa.

Over the decades Reports highlight research and courses that have relevance to social and national needs. This is clearly stated in the 1988 Report:

....factors that should be taken into account when programmes or departments are looked at for restructuring...[are] the importance to society and appropriateness of a department or programme to a university such as UCT (with judgements made in the light of the University's Mission Statement). Provision will also be made for the new developments necessary for academic and social progress (Saunders, 1988, p. 9).

In 1996 an Academic Planning Framework was approved by Senate and Council, setting criteria for "*far-reaching academic reform in the years ahead*" (Ramphela, 1996, p. 4). This provided the guidelines within which UCT's ten faculties were rationalized into six faculties in 1998 and for the development of the new Academic Programmes in 1999. New courses reflecting changed priorities include those on entrepreneurship, HIV/Aids, Traditional Medicines, Film and Media, and the new MBChB curriculum emphasizing preventative medicine. The on-going transformation of the curriculum to align it with society's needs continues to remain on the agenda in the 2005 Report.

Africanization is another a theme that emerges in the early 1980's. As early as 1982 Dr Saunders Reports that:

In many cases syllabuses have been adapted to reflect our place in Africa. There is more that can be done here, but at all times we intend to keep a

healthy balance and tension between the questions that belong to Africanization and those which are fundamental and universal." (Saunders, 1982, p. 3).

The assumption that what is African is not universal reflects a colonial perspective that persists more subtly in later references to our post-apartheid positioning in Africa. The current Mission statement that urges the University to "*recognize our location in Africa and our historical context.*" (Saunders, 1995). In 1994, this recognition of our place in Africa takes on a new aspect which is to be repeated in later Reports when Dr Saunders says: "*During 1994 there were many indicators of UCT's standing as one of Africa's leading research institutions.*" (Saunders, 1994, p. 11). The establishment of the Centre for African Studies and later the African Gender Institute in 1996 also lend strength to the Africanizing of the curriculum at UCT. During 1997 a number of departments are reported to be looking critically at their curricula to ensure that courses reflect the cultural values and diversity of South African society. Interesting to note is the introductory sentence of the Dean of Science's Report in 1999 in which he states: "*The Faculty of Science aims to be a paradigm of successful science in Africa.*" (Reddy in Ramphele, 1999, p. 40), suggesting an 'othering' of epistemology in Africa.

APPENDIX 7: Professional Development Programmes for Women in Higher Education

Programmes designed to provide special development for women leaders in higher education include:

- Higher Education Resources Development (HERS) Mid-America (USA)
- Australian Technology Network (ATN) Women's Executive Development (WEXDEV) Programme (Australia)
- American Council on Education (ACE) Office of Women in Higher Education (OWHE) (USA)
- HERS-SA (South Africa)
- WonderWoman Programme (South Africa)

The **HERS Mid-America** website states that HERS “*sponsors professional development activities designed to improve the status of women in higher education*” (HERS Mid-America, n.d.). The HERS initiative arose out of discussions among senior women in higher education institutions in United States that took place in the early 1970s. These women, who called themselves “Committee for the Concerns of Women in New England Colleges and Universities”, were spurred to action by an awareness of the lack of career opportunities for academic women. In 1972 they obtained funding from the Ford Foundation for what started off as a referral and placement service for women, with workshops on career counseling and developing professional administrative skills. The motivation for this initiative was described as: “[T]o improve the opportunities and status of academic professional women and to aid colleges and universities in compliance with the requirements of Title IX (of the Education Amendments of 1972) that mandated an end to discrimination based on gender in employment.” (Diamond and Farnum, 2004) In 1976 HERS in the United States obtained donor funding to launch the Summer Institute, “*a residential programme co sponsored with Bryn Mawr College to offer appropriate administrative training for women seeking advancement in higher education.*” (Ibid) The Summer Institute has been held every year since then and is the flagship among HERS America's several professional development programmes. Over its decades of operation, the Summer Institute had evolved a successful professional development formula, integrating presentations by professionals in the field with career guidance and networking opportunities. The programme brings some 70 women from higher education institutions all over the United States together each year at Bryn Mawr College for four weeks. It is structured around input on the External Environment, the Academic Environment, the Institutional Environment, and personal professional development.

The **WEXDEV** initiative, started in 1996, is a women's executive development programme which operates across five of the technical universities in Australia. ATN WEXDEV describes itself as “*a dynamic and strategic career development program designed for senior women on the academic and general staffs of these universities. The program is a response to the continued under-representation of women at senior levels in higher education, a situation Australia shares with the international university community.*” (Chesterman, n.d.).

The **WonderWoman** programme is one of the few in-house programmes for women. It was started in the University of Witwatersrand in 2002 to provide a series of skills workshops for cohorts of academic women (Orr et al. 2006)).

The **Office of Women in Higher Education** runs a number of initiatives and professional development programmes to provide “*the national direction for women’s leadership development and career advancement*” (Office of Women in Higher Education, n.d.).

The **HERS-SA** website describes the programme as: “*HERS-SA is a managed network to improve the status of women in higher education in South Africa*” (HERS-SA Home Page, n.d.).

HERS-SA’s professional development philosophy:

HERS-SA professional development programmes are only available to women. Experience has shown that women’s groups settle down quickly and explore issues at a deep level when participants realize that their issues are taken seriously and significant support exists for them within the group. Some of the topics that emerge in discussions are gender-specific and require a secure environment for thorough exploration. The workshops are pro-women, not anti-men.

HERS-SA recognizes that women balance multiple roles and that work is but one element of a complex life. The women are encouraged to relate the material and discussions to their own circumstances, knowing that life experiences beyond the work place are perceived as valid.

Role models are included wherever possible as facilitators and guest speakers who share stories of their own careers. It is not uncommon for participants to experience each other as role models.

Networking is considered by HERS-SA to be a critical element in professional development, and participants are continuously encouraged to network and establish links with each other that go beyond the boundaries of the workshops.

Excerpt from unpublished document “HERS-SA Lifting, Learning, Leading” (Shackleton, 2006).

The HERS-SA Academy

The Academy has a carefully constructed programme over a week which allows time for learning, interaction and reflection. During the mornings presentations with ample time for interactive discussion are presented by (mainly women) leaders in the particular area. These presentations look at the broader higher education environment in Africa and South Africa; key aspects of the academic environment; and essential administrative functions within a higher education institution.

and essential administrative functions within a higher education institution. Presentations are not aimed at being 'how to' talks, but rather at giving delegates a broader understanding of their work environment, its complexity and some of the associated political realities. In the afternoons the delegates are able to select workshops which focus in more detail on specific topics (such as Building Research Capacity or The Dean as an Academic Leader) and workshops that address leadership and personal career development. Wherever possible women presenters are used, providing important role models. After-dinner presentations provide opportunities for senior women to share life stories and experiences with the delegates. The networking that results from having some 85 women together in one venue for a week is considered an essential part of the programme.

Before departure, every delegate to the Academy submits an anonymous evaluation form which is used to improve the following year's programme. Each year comments received from delegates are overwhelmingly positive.

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 8: Women in Senior Positions in South African Universities 2007
(Riordan, 2007, pers. comm.)

Number of Universities = 23

Senior position	Number of women	Percentage women
Vice Chancellor	3+1*	17%
Registrar	5	22%
Deputy Vice Chancellor	15	21%
Executive Director	21	21%
Dean	42**	28%
Total	87	24%

* Position was vacant and a woman was Acting Vice Chancellor

**In most cases, Deans include one Dean of students

Data collected by Sarah Riordan, HERS-SA, April 2007. Not to be cited without permission.